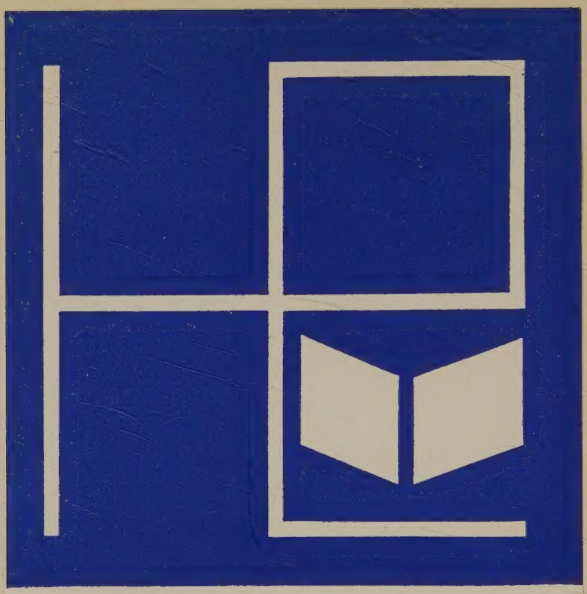

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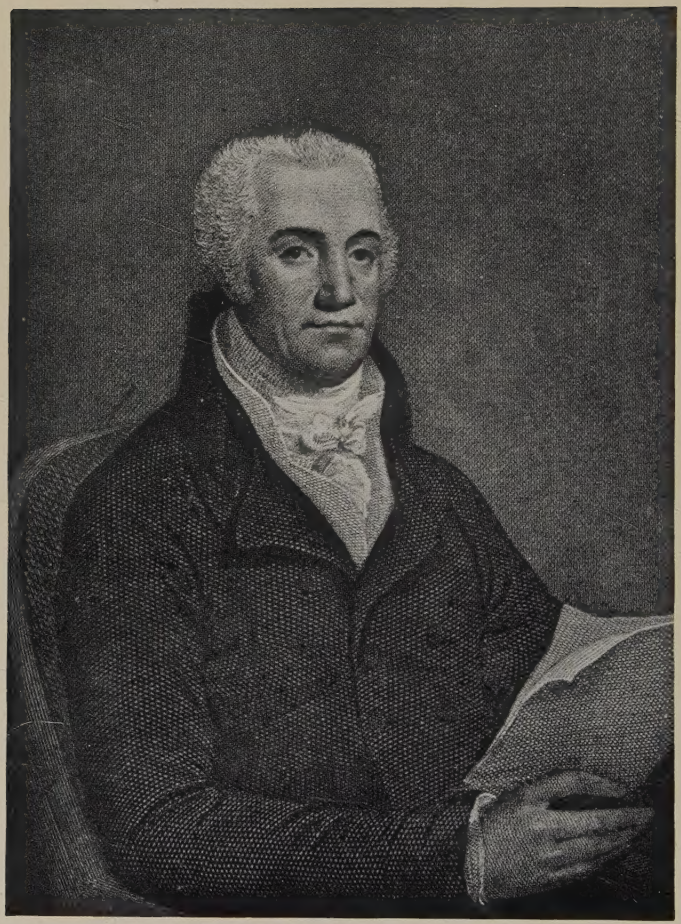

JOEL BARLOW

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY DURAND
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY ROBERT FULTON

The FRIENDLY CLUB And OTHER PORTRAITS

By Francis Parsons

"Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile."
—YOUNG'S *Night Thoughts*

Edwin Valentine Mitchell
Hartford, Connecticut
1922

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First Edition

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To
The Memory of
My Father

NOTE

THE thanks of the author are due to Mr. Charles Hopkins Clark, Editor of "The Hartford Courant," in which most of the following essays originally appeared anonymously, for permission to republish them in the revised, enlarged and sometimes entirely re-written form in which they are here presented. "The Friendly Club," "The Mystery of the Bell Tavern" and "Our Battle Laureate" have not been previously printed.

Citation of authorities, except so far as they appear in the text, has been considered inappropriate in the case of such informal articles as these. It would be ungracious, however, to omit mention of the writer's indebtedness in connection with the second essay to Mr. Charles Knowles Bolton's "The Elizabeth Whitman Mystery," which is the latest and most comprehensive document on this baffling incident of New England social history.

F. P.

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I: The Friendly Club

I: The Friendly Club

A HARVARD man, not exempt from the complacency sometimes attributed to graduates of his university, once observed, according to Barrett Wendell, that the group of forgotten litterateurs, who toward the close of the eighteenth century attained a brief measure of fame as the "Hartford Wits," represents the only considerable literary efflorescence of Yale. The remark did not fail to provoke the rejoinder, doubtless from a Yale source, that nevertheless at the time when the Hartford Wits flourished no Harvard man had produced literature half so good as theirs.

How good this literature was considered in its day is not readily understood by the modern reader, for from the Hudibrastic imitations and heroic couplets of these writers, whose brilliance was dimmed so long ago, the contemporary flavor has long since evaporated. Indeed there is no

modern reader in the general sense. It is only the antiquarian, the literary researcher, the casual burrower among the shelves of some old library who now opens these yellow pages and follows for a few moments the stilted lines that seem to him a diluted imitation of Pope, Goldsmith and Butler. Professor Beers of Yale ventures the surmise that he may be the only living man who has read the whole of Joel Barlow's "Columbiad."

Yet in their time this coterie of poets, who gathered in the little Connecticut town after the close of the war for independence, became famous not only in their own land but abroad, and the community where most of them lived and met at their "friendly club"—was it at the Black Horse Tavern or the "Bunch of Grapes"?—shone in reflected glory as the literary center of America. No Boswell was among them to record the sparkling epigrams, the jovial give and take, the profound "political and philosophical" debates of those weekly gatherings. Yet imagination loves to linger on the old friendships, the patriotic aspirations, the common passion for creative art, the wooing of the Muses of an older world, thus dimly shadowed forth against the

background of the raw young country just embarking on its mysterious experiment.

Do not doubt that these personages whose individualities are now so effectually concealed behind the veil of their sounding and artificial cantos were real young men who cherished their dreams and their hopes. One can see them gathered around the great wood fire in the low ceiled room redolent of tobacco, blazing hickory and hot Jamaica rum.

Here is Trumbull, the lawyer, the author of "M'Fingal" which everybody has read and which has been published in England and honored with the criticism of the Quarterly and Edinburgh Reviews. He is a little man, rather frail, rather nervous, not without impatience, with a ready wit that sometimes bites deep. Here is Lemuel Hopkins, the physician, whose lank body, long nose and prominent eyes are outward manifestations of his eccentric genius. His presence lends a fillip to the gathering for he is an odd fish and no one can tell what he will do or say next. Threatened all his life with tuberculosis he is nevertheless a man of great muscular strength and during his days as a soldier he used to astonish his comrades by his ability to fire a heavy

king's arm, held in one hand at arm's length. In his verses he castigates shams and humbugs of all kinds, whether the nostrums of medical quacks or the irreverent vaporings of General Ethan Allen—

> "Lo, Allen, 'scaped from British jails
> His tushes broke by biting nails,
> Appears in hyperborean skies,
> To tell the world the Bible lies."

Perhaps Colonel David Humphreys, full of war stories and anecdotes of his intimacy with General Washington, on whose staff he served, is in Hartford for the evening. A well dressed, hearty, sophisticated traveler and man of the world is Colonel Humphreys, who would be recognized at first glance as a soldier, though not as a poet. Nevertheless he is addicted to the writing of verse which is apt to run in the vein of comedy or burlesque when it is not earnestly patriotic. To look at him one would know that he enjoys a good dinner, a good story and a bottle of port.

We may be sure that Joel Barlow is here, the vacillating, visionary Barlow who has tried, or is to try his hand at many pursuits besides epic poetry—the ministry, the law, bookselling, phi-

losophy, journalism and diplomacy—but who is pre-occupied now, as all his life, with his magnum opus, "The Vision of Columbus," later elaborated into "The Columbiad." He is a good looking, if somewhat self-centered young man, a favorite in the days of his New Haven residence with the young ladies of that town. Perhaps it was there that he first met the charming and talented Elizabeth Whitman, the daughter of the Rev. Dr. Elnathan Whitman, sometime pastor of the South Congregational Church in Hartford, who often visited her friend Betty Stiles, the daughter of the president of Yale College. A few of Elizabeth Whitman's letters that have survived —the packet bearing an endorsement in Barlow's handwriting—are evidence that he made her a confidante of his literary schemes and hopes and welcomed her assistance with his great epic. A strong friendship and entire harmony seem to have existed between her and Ruth Baldwin of New Haven, whom Barlow married during the war, and who is said to have "inspired in the poet's breast a remarkable passion, one that survived all the mutations of a most adventurous career, and glowed as fervently at fifty as at twenty-five." For nearly a year the marriage

was kept a secret, but parental forgiveness was at last secured and Barlow has now brought his wife to Hartford where he is continuing his legal studies, begun in his college town. But the law will not engross him long. Soon, with his friend Elisha Babcock, he is to start a new journal, "The American Mercury," of which his editorship, like all of Barlow's early enterprises, is to be brief, though the paper is to continue till 1830.

A tall, slender man, Noah Webster by name, a class-mate of Barlow at Yale, though four years his junior, sits near him, relaxing for the moment in the informality of these surroundings his strangely intense powers of mental application, divided just now between the law and the preparation of his "Grammatical Institute." To the "poetical effusions" of his friends he contributes nothing, but he was an intimate of them all and no doubt often attended their gatherings.

Perhaps, now and later, something of the poet's license in the matter of chronology may be granted. Let us assume, then, that young Dr. Mason Cogswell is in town for a day or two, looking over the ground with a view of settling here in the practice of medicine and surgery in

which he is now engaged at Stamford, after his training in New York where he served with his brother James at the soldiers' hospital. It is true that the fragments of his diary, which by a fortunate chance were rescued from destruction, do not mention any visit to Hartford as early as this, though his journal does describe a short sojourn here a few years later. Still, his presence is by no means impossible. He is a companionable youth, as popular with the young ladies as Barlow, but with an easier manner, a readier humor. Delighted at this opportunity to sit for an evening at the feet of the older celebrities, he is a welcome guest, for already he has a reputation for versatility and culture and the fact that he was valedictorian of the Yale Class of 1780—and its youngest member—is not forgotten.

Richard Alsop, book-worm, naturalist and linguist, who is beginning to dip into verse, has locked up his book shop for the night and is here. Near him sits a man who is, or is soon to be, his brother-in-law, a tall, dark youth, Theodore Dwight, the brother of the more famous Timothy, whose pastoral duties detain him at Greenfield Hill, but who is sometimes numbered as

one of this group. Theodore is now studying law, but he has a flair for writing and makes an occasional adventure into the gazettes.

These more youthful aspirants have their spurs to win. A little later they, with their friend Dr. Elihu Smith, who published the first American poetic anthology, are to get into print in a vein of satirical verse ridiculing the prevalent literary affectation and bombast. After journalistic publication these satires will appear in book form under the title of "The Echo," in the introduction to which the anonymous authors state that the poems "owed their origin to the accidental suggestion of a moment of literary sportiveness." "The Echo" was "Printed at the Porcupine Press by Pasquin Petronius."

That particular sportive moment is still in the future. Now it is sufficient for these younger men to shine in the reflected luster of the established luminaries. These greater lights are worthy indeed of the worship of the lesser stars. Three of them have achieved, or are soon to acquire, an international as well as a national reputation. That "M'Fingal" had provoked discussion in England has been noted. Humphreys's "Address to the Armies of America," written in camp at

Peekskill, and dedicated to the Duke de Rochefoucault, was issued with an introductory letter by the poet's friend, the Marquis de Chastellux, in a French translation in Paris, after its publication in England where the Monthly and Critical Reviews gave it a fair amount of praise, though they could not refrain from the statement that the poem was "not a very pleasing one to a good Englishman." Barlow's "Vision of Columbus" was published almost simultaneously in Hartford and London in 1787.

In short these men had attained a genuine intellectual eminence in their generation. They were the cognoscenti of their day. Like most young intellectuals their gospel concerned itself with reform, with the ridicule of shams, with the refusal to accept the popularity of new doctrines as a final test of their value. Trumbull and Barlow, both Yale graduates, had fought with their friend Timothy Dwight their first reform campaign which was an effort to introduce into the somewhat archaic and outworn body of the Yale curriculum the breath of the humanities and of modern thought. Trumbull, according to Moses Coit Tyler, was an example of a "new tone coming into American letters—urbanity,

perspective, moderation of emphasis, satire, especially on its more playful side—that of irony."

Their interests were not only literary. They were publicists, political satirists, social philosophers, not without their religious theories. In all these matters their search was for the true standards and as champions of causes and enthusiasts of ideals they exhibited a variation from type in that their warfare was waged, not against the recognized conventions in government, religion and society, but in favor of them. Priding themselves on untrammelled and direct thinking, their reasoning led them to support the established, the orderly, the stable. Temperamentally aristocrats, theoretically republicans—in the broad sense of the term—they were practically federalists. "The Anarchiad," a series of poems they were contributing anonymously about this time to "The New Haven Gazette," dealt satirically with the dangers of national unrest and instability, of selfish aggrandizement and of a fictitious currency. In these verses Hesper addresses "the Sages and Counsellors at Philadelphia" as follows:

"But know, ye favor'd race, one potent head
Must rule your States, and strike your foes with dread."

And in the same passage occur some lines, attributed to Hopkins, that Daniel Webster may have read:

> "Through ruined realms the voice of UNION calls;
> On you she calls! Attend the warning cry:
> YE LIVE UNITED, OR DIVIDED, DIE!"

They ridiculed unsparingly the dangers hidden under the cloak of "Democracy"—dangers imminent and menacing in the days following the end of the war in which most of them had served. In fighting these perils they were sagacious in making use of the means frequently employed by advocates of radicalism—invective, irony and ridicule. For these methods secured, as they naturally would secure if cleverly managed, a wide appeal. Yet the efficiency of such weapons depends very largely upon the occasion. Their potency is contemporary with the events against which they are directed and with the passing years their force weakens. Who reads nowadays the political diatribes of Swift, the tracts of Defoe, or the letters of Junius? Here perhaps is in part an explanation of the great temporary influence of the Hartford Wits, as well as of their complete modern obscuration. The brilliant

blade they wielded had a biting edge, but the rust of a century and a half has dulled it.

This general leaning toward the established canons, this impatience with the new doctrines that in the judgment of these men made for disunion and disaster, should be qualified, at least in the religious aspect, in two interesting particulars, each contradictory to the other. Hopkins began adult life as a sceptic but became a defender of the Christian philosophy. Barlow, on the other hand, deserted in later life the orthodox ideals of his youth, never, perhaps, very enthusiastically championed, and during his sojourn in France became a rationalist and freethinker.

In general, however, the Hartford Wits fought for the established order against the forces of innovation and disintegration and thus when they sat down to unburden their minds of their visions of their country's future greatness, or of their impatience with demagoguery and political short-sightedness, it was natural that their sense of tradition and order should lead their thoughts to seek expression in the verse forms lifted into fame by the masters of an older and greater literature and accepted as the conventional vehicle

of poetic expression. Here is another reason, if they must be catalogued, for the forgetfulness of the Hartford Wits. These balanced, formal lines, so expressive of the artificial modes and manners of the subjects of Queen Anne and her successors, are to us prosy, old-fashioned and imitative. Their charm has fled. Can you imagine Miss Amy Lowell reading Hudibras? And we must admit that "M'Fingal," though it has given to literature some still remembered aphorisms, such as—

> "No man e'er felt the halter draw
> With good opinion of the law"—

is, on the whole, poorer reading than its model.

ii

It is significant that the distinction of the individuals united in the "friendly club" was not confined to their literary activities. In an age sometimes esteemed narrow and limited in its cultural aspects they are refreshing in their versatility. Trumbull was a well-known lawyer and served on the bench for eighteen years, part of his legal training having been pursued in the of-

fice of John Adams. It was a strange combination, not unprecedented but nevertheless arresting, of this talent for the law associated with the artistic temperament. For with all his practical attributes Trumbull was essentially an artist. His early poem entitled "An Ode to Sleep," says Tyler, "is a composition resonant of noble and sweet music and making, if one may say so, a nearer approach to genuine poetry than had then [1773] been achieved by any living American except Freneau." And in the following bit of autobiography, quoted by Tyler, may be discerned the self-distrust and depression to which no soul that longs and strives for the beautiful in this imperfect world is entirely a stranger: "Formed with the keenest sensibility and the most extravagantly romantic feelings . . . I was born the dupe of imagination. My satirical turn was not native. It was produced by the keen spirit of critical observation, operating on disappointed expectation, and revenging itself on real or fancied wrongs."

This is an extraordinary item of self-revelation to come from a man who at various times held office as State's Attorney for Hartford County, member of the General Assembly and Judge of

the Superior and Supreme Courts of his State. It may not be an entirely fanciful surmise to attribute a partial cause of the delicate health that followed Trumbull all his long life to the warring elements that strove to unite in his brilliant mentality.

With Dr. Hopkins poetizing was distinctly a by-product. His chief concern was the practice of medicine and in his profession he won a reputation that is not entirely forgotten today by members of the faculty, for he was probably the first American physician to assert that tuberculosis was curable and his success as a specialist in this field was so marked that, says Dr. Walter R. Steiner in a monograph upon him, "patients with this disease came to him for treatment from a great distance—one being recorded to have made the trip all the way from New Orleans." In his treatment he was unique in his day in very largely discarding the use of drugs and relying more upon pure air, good diet and moderate exercise when strength permitted. His theory that fresh air was better for colds than the warm air of houses was revolutionary, but so was almost everything he did—or so it seemed to his contemporaries. At one time he evidently considered

that New York City might offer a wider field of practice than the Connecticut capital, for in December, 1789, Trumbull wrote to Oliver Wolcott, "Dr. Hopkins has an itch of running away to New York, but I trust his indolence will prevent him. However if you should catch him in your city, I desire you to take him up or secure him so that we may have him again, for which you shall have sixpence reward and all charges." In spite of his malady he lived till almost fifty-one, dying in April, 1801, the head of the medical profession in Connecticut.

It is to be noted that though Dr. Cogswell was one of the chief contributors to "The Echo" his main business in life was as a surgeon rather than a poet, and he became one of the most skillful surgical practitioners in the country, being the first to introduce into the United States the operation for cataracts and the first to tie the carotid artery. Closely associated with him is the pathetic memory of his daughter Alice who became stone deaf in early childhood and whose infirmity led to the establishment at Hartford of the first school in this country for the education of the deaf. Of this institution Dr. Cogswell was one of the founders and he was a leader in other

philanthropic enterprises. He lived till 1830. To the last he wore the knee breeches and silk stockings customary in his youth and which he considered the only proper dress for a gentleman. His death broke the heart of his daughter Alice, to whom he had been a never-failing protection and support, and she died within a fortnight after her father.

In contrast with the activites of their colleagues, the careers of Theodore Dwight and Alsop are associated solely with the product of their pens. Dwight, however, was more of a publicist and editor than a creative literary worker. He had the brains with which nature had endowed his family and his history of the unjustly maligned Hartford Convention is a thoughtful and able piece of work—an original historical document that is illuminating and suggestive. Such distinction as Alsop attained was strictly literary, yet one gets the impression that he worked at writing rather as an amateur than a professional. He was really a student, a scholar, a research worker, and seems to have sought his reward more in the pleasure of following his interests than in the quest of public recognition. Much that he wrote was never published.

There was a great deal in life that Colonel Humphreys enjoyed besides composing verses and a great many activities other than poetry for which he may be remembered. Not the least hint of any paralyzing self-distrust, no subtle questionings as to whether it was all worth while, disturbed his equanimity. And fate rewarded his zest in life by furnishing him with a variety of experiences. They began in the war from which he emerged with a reputation for gallantry and daring and, what was perhaps more valuable, with the firm friendship of George Washington. He participated in the raid into Sag Harbor by Colonel Meigs in '77 and the next year raided the Long Island shore on his own account, burning three enemy ships and getting away without the loss of a man. It was only a freak of the weather that perhaps withheld from him a more glorious exploit for on Christmas night, 1780, he headed a desperate venture that had for its object no less an achievement than the capture of Sir Henry Clinton at his headquarters in New York. The rising of the wintry northwest gale drove the boats of the little group of adventurers away from the intended landing near the foot of Broadway and swept them down through the British

shipping in the harbor to Sandy Hook. After Yorktown he was ordered by Washington to carry the captured colors to Congress which in the enthusiasm of the moment voted him a handsome sword.

"See Humphreys, glorious from the field retire,
Sheathe the glad sword and string the sounding lyre,"

wrote Barlow in his "Vision of Columbus." The lyre accompanied songs in praise of his country, tributes to his commander-in-chief, political satires, and even love lyrics—

"Enough with war my lay has sung
A softer theme awakes my tongue
'Tis beauty's force divine;
Can I resist that air, that grace,
The charms of motion, figure, face?
For ev'ry charm is thine."

But this was by the way. Appointed secretary to the commission, consisting of Franklin, John Adams and Jefferson, sent to negotiate treaties of commerce and amity with European nations, he no doubt thoroughly enjoyed his two years in London and Paris. In theory the nobility of Europe may have been anathema to a patriotic

citizen of a republic, but practically there were many persons among them whose acquaintance was agreeable to an amiable and gallant gentleman of sensibility like Colonel Humphreys and there was, no doubt, a certain gratification in dedicating one's poems to a duke and in having them reviewed by a marquis who incidentally disclosed the fact that he was an old companion in arms. Also it was pleasant to be elected a fellow of the Royal Society.

On Colonel Humphreys's return he spent some time as a member of the family at Mount Vernon where Washington encouraged him in his project of writing a history of the war which, however, never got any further in print than a memorial of his old general, Putnam. At Mount Vernon he wrote an ode celebrating his great and good friend whose friendship we may reasonably infer constituted one of his chief conversational assets:

"Let others sing his deeds in arms,
A nation sav'd, and conquest's charms:
Posterity shall hear,
'Twas mine, return'd from Europe's courts
To share his thoughts, partake his sports
And sooth his partial ear."

It is clear that European life had its attractions for Colonel Humphreys. At all events he returned to it, serving as minister to Portugal and later to Spain whence he imported his famous merino sheep to his acres at Humphreysville, now Seymour. Here, and in the adjoining town of Derby, he projected and to a creditable extent realized, an ideal patriarchal manufacturing and farming community, instructing his operatives and husbandmen in improved industrial methods, in scientific agriculture and stock raising, athletics, poetry and the drama in which one of his productions was actually presented on the stage. At least he accomplished his wish, voiced in his poem "On the Industry of the United States of America"—

"Oh, might my guidance from the downs of Spain
Lead a white flock across the western main,
. . . . .
Clad in the raiment my merinos yield,
Like Cincinnatus, fed from my own field:
. . . . .
There would I pass, with friends, beneath my trees,
What rests from public life, in letter'd ease."

iii

Though the friends grouped around the tavern

fire are united in two sympathetic qualities—devotion to the Muses and a proud conviction, singularly justified by events, of the destiny of their country—it is manifest that the membership of the little club furnishes only another illustration of the truism that human personality is the most varying thing in the world and that life has different lessons for each of us. The most baffling individuality of them all, the man whose story seems to have been a quest for some mysterious, unattained goal, was Joel Barlow.

In early life everything he attempted went to pieces. His chaplaincy in the army was a *tour de force* which he dropped as soon as possible. The law proved a mistake almost as soon as begun and his editorship of "The American Mercury" was abandoned after less than a year. Perhaps it was with renewed hope, perhaps it was with something of desperation, that he persuaded himself to embark on an entirely new undertaking and to accept a proposal to journey overseas to procure settlers for the Ohio lands which the Scioto Land Company desired to sell to unsuspecting Frenchmen. It is an established fact that Barlow was unsuspecting himself, but after he had procured the settlers and shipped them off

with golden promises the project turned out to be a gigantic fraud. Personal humiliation was added to general discouragement. Yet somehow he survived the mortification. It may be that at this particular time mundane affairs did not seem to be of the utmost importance. He was dwelling somewhat in the clouds, in a vision—the "Vision of Columbus," which he proposed to amplify and republish in a form more fitting the great theme than the first modest edition of the original poem. He was pre-occupied with the millenium he foresaw.

To the present day reader it is of the highest interest to note that the "Vision" foretold the Panama Canal, and that the climax of the poem is a congress of the nations.

> "Hither the delegated sires ascend,
> And all the cares of every clime attend.
> . . . . . .
> To give each realm its limits and its laws
> Bid the last breath of dire contention cease,
> And bind all regions in the leagues of peace."

Indeed with the break-down of his career as a promoter the tide began to turn. Barlow's friends knew he was innocent of complicity in the land swindle. In Paris he found himself at last in an

environment where freedom of thought was encouraged, where the ambitions of a poet were regarded with respect and admiration. He was always an idealist and he caught the contagion in the mental atmosphere of Paris as the revolution came on. Perhaps it seemed to him that his dream of the millenium was coming true. He became a Girondist and a political writer, supporting himself mainly by his pen, with the re-writing of the "Vision" always in the back of his mind. Was this the real Barlow—or was it a phase, a manifestation of a kind of philosophic idealism, fostered by the air of Paris, so favorable to the blossoming of this new flower of liberty and universal human brotherhood which centered on France the minds of all the dreamers of the world?

What did he now think, we wonder, of his dedication of the first edition of his epic, published the year before he sailed for France, to Louis the Sixteenth whom, as one commentator has noted, he soon indirectly assisted in sending to the guillotine? He had gone a long way from the militant conservatism of the brilliant companions of his youth—from the days when he had preached the gospel to American soldiers and

had collaborated with Timothy Dwight, at the request of the General Association of the Connecticut Clergy, in getting out an edition of Isaac Watts's metrical versions of the Psalms—to which he had added a few poetical renderings of his own.

For the following years his residence alternated between Paris and London where he found congenial souls among the artists and poets who were members of the Constitutional Society. His "Advice to the Privileged Orders" was attacked by Burke, praised by Fox, proscribed by the British government and translated into French and German. In 1792 he presented to the National Convention of France a treatise on government which was in fact a remarkable state paper, combining profound philosophic theories of government with practical administrative and executive suggestions. As a result he was made a citizen of France—an honor he shared among Americans with only Washington and Hamilton.

Defeat for election as a deputy from Savoy and his repugnance to the excesses of the Revolution appear to have thrown him out of practical politics for a time. And then a strange thing happened. This visionary poet and idealist at-

tempted to retrieve his fortunes in commerce and speculation and actually succeeded. During his consulship at Algiers, from which he anticipated he might never return, he left a letter for his wife in which he stated that his estate might amount to one hundred and twenty thousand dollars if French funds rose to par.

This appointment came to him in a pleasant way. One day in the summer of 1795 he returned from a business trip to the Low Countries to find an old friend waiting for him. Colonel Humphreys, now minister at Lisbon, had arrived at the request of the administration to ask Barlow to accept this mission to Algiers where for a year and a half he was to labor, succeeding in the end in liberating imprisoned countrymen and in effecting a treaty that composed troublesome difficulties.

It must have been an interesting reunion. Humphreys was too much of a cosmopolitan, too generous in spirit, to make Barlow's growing liberalism of thought a personal grievance. Here for the exiled American was first-hand news of the old Connecticut friends—that Trumbull, between ill health and the pressure of public affairs, was neglecting the Muses; that Noah Webster

was said to be working on a great lexicon; that Dr. Cogswell had settled in Hartford and married a daughter of Colonel William Ledyard who was killed at Fort Griswold with his own sword in the act of surrender; that a play by Dr. Elihu Smith had been acted at the John Street Theatre in New York; that Timothy Dwight would probably succeed Dr. Stiles as President of Yale—and much besides. Very likely Humphreys confided to his friend his growing interest in Miss Ann Bulkley, an English heiress, whom he had met in Lisbon and who soon afterward was to become his wife, and Barlow no doubt found a sympathetic listener to his great project of enlarging and re-publishing the "Vision."

His return from Algiers found French consols rising with the Napoleonic successes and Barlow lived as became a man of wealth and distinction. Robert Fulton, who made his home with him, painted his portrait in the intervals of experimenting with submarine boats and torpedoes in the Seine and the harbor at Brest. Indeed Barlow had now acquired so strong an influence with the Directory and the French people that his biographer attributes to him the chief part in avert-

ing war between France and the United States in the tense days after 1798.

Then followed a return to his own country where he had an ambition to found a national institution for education and the advancement of science. He built a beautiful home, not in New England, be it noted, but near Washington —the "Holland House of America"—and began, but never finished, a history of the United States. He did, however, at last complete "The Columbiad," which was published in Philadelphia in 1807—"the finest specimen of book-making ever produced in America."

Did the great moment hold something of disillusion and disappointment, when, amid the somewhat perfunctory adulation, came the bitter criticism of the Federalists and the expressed conviction of some of his old Yale and Hartford friends that he was an apostate in politics and religion? To him it was clear that they did not understand. How could it be expected that Timothy Dwight, for example, the grandson of Jonathan Edwards, with all of New England's conservatism and provincialism in his blood, could understand? Yet Barlow's ancestral background was the same—but who can fathom the depths

of personality, or solve the complexity of motive and aspiration?

Perhaps there were times when the returned wanderer grew homesick for Paris. At last the chance to return to the land that had adopted him came—a chance for notable service in an honorable capacity. War was again in the air and in 1811 Barlow went back to France as minister plenipotentiary, charged with the duty of again averting conflict and negotiating a treaty embodying a settlement of the differences.

In the French capital he took his old house. His old servants came back to him with tears of joy. Old friends gathered about him. It was not easy, however, to clinch the treaty. The Emperor was involved in momentous affairs. The Russian expedition was on foot. The ministers procrastinated. There is an intimation in the record that the poet and political theorist was out-maneuvered in the negotiations by players of a game that had nothing to do with poetry or abstract questions but that concerned itself, persistently and relentlessly, with very definite but not entirely obvious purposes. Yet it does not seem that this inference is conclusively supported by the evidence. However that may be, it was

given out that Barlow had secured, and he unquestionably believed that he had secured, an agreement as to the provisions of the proposed treaty. At any rate the Emperor consented to meet the American envoy if he would come to Vilna in West Russia.

So in that dreary winter he set out with a high hope of achieving his greatest service to his country, but what would have happened at Vilna we shall never know, for on Barlow's approach to that town an incredible and stupendous piece of news awaited him. The invincible Grand Army was retreating, apparently in some demoralization. Everything was in confusion. Where the Emperor was, no one knew. Obviously nothing could now be done and the American minister started to return.

Somewhere on those frozen roads the Emperor passed him, racing for Paris to save his dynasty and himself. In the exposure and hardship Barlow fell ill. At the little village of Zarnovich, near Cracow, it became evident that he could travel no further and there, in the midst of that historic cataclysm, he died.

It was a strange ending for one of the old Hartford coterie. In the clairvoyance said some-

times to accompany the supreme moment did he realize that if his great epic might not live forever he had at least given form in his day to a dream of which civilization would never let go? Did any intimation come to him that his "Ode to Hasty Pudding," written off-hand at a Savoyard inn, held more real emotion than all the balanced cadences of his monumental work? No doubt his delirious fancies sometimes went back to the old days. Perhaps he saw once more the faces of his old companions of the friendly club, not clouded now with misunderstanding or disapproval. From beyond the frosted panes came intermittently the confused noises of the great retreat, with all their implications of selfish ambition, human suffering and the continual warfare of the world. Was his belief in the final triumph of the fraternity of mankind shaken by that sinister monotone? It is idle to conjecture, but let us hope that he was comforted by a lingering faith, revived in this hour of his extremity from the days of his youth, that he would soon learn as to the truth of his vision and that he would find as well the answers to the other riddles that had puzzled him all his life.

II: The Mystery of the Bell Tavern

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THE investigator of early American fiction will find that a peculiar interest attaches to two novels, both published in the last decade of the eighteenth century, both following Richardson in their epistolary form and both founded on fact.

One of these was called "Charlotte Temple, or a Tale of Truth." In the graveyard of Trinity Church in New York, at the head of Wall Street, is a large stone, flush with the ground, bearing the name of the heroine of this now forgotten story which in its day attained an astonishing popularity. The tale is of a young girl who during the War of the American Revolution eloped from an English school with a British officer who abandoned her in New York where she died soon after the birth of a daughter. The tradition runs that more than a century ago the daughter, grown to womanhood, caused her

mother's body to be removed to an English churchyard, but the stone still marks the first resting place and when the writer last saw it two wreaths lay upon it.

In 1797—seven years after the date of the first edition of "Charlotte Temple"—the second of our two novels appeared. It was called "The Coquette" and was written by Mrs. Hannah Foster, the wife of a Brighton, Massachusetts, minister. For many years it was read and re-read throughout the country, the latest edition appearing in 1866. Like "Charlotte Temple" its theme was the tragedy of abandonment. It seems, indeed, that the writer who wished to intrigue the interest of our ancestors of this period was compelled to hang his plot on the judiciously interwoven threads of sentiment and gloom. Perhaps no further proof of this is needed than the example of Charles Brockden Brown's portentous and sinister romances, with their undeniable flashes of genius. But it is well to remember, too, that these were the days when "The Castle of Otranto," "Clarissa Harlowe," and "The Vicar of Wakefield" were all popular, and all exhibited varying phases of the literary vogue of the day. In other words,

though the prevailing mode of thought found expression in different forms, the imaginative impulses beneath the various manifestations were the same.

Therefore it is not surprising to find little relief from the tragic note in "The Coquette." It is true that the author endeavors to present the heroine, Eliza Wharton, as a worldly and volatile young woman, but these touches of lightness have lost with the passing years whatever approaches to polite comedy they may have once implied. One must confess that regarded strictly as a piece of fiction the book makes rather hard reading today. But examined with some knowledge of the mystery upon which it is founded, the old novel becomes a genuine human document.

Mrs. Foster was a family connection of Elizabeth Whitman, the original of "Eliza Wharton," and may have known her. Whatever the shortcomings of her portrayal may be, it is clear that the authoress was endeavoring to set forth in her book the character, as she estimated it, of the charming and gifted girl, the tragedy of whose death is still unexplained. It is true that the accuracy of the portrait in all respects may be

doubted. For example, the few letters of Elizabeth Whitman that have been preserved are far more spontaneous and delightful than any of Eliza Wharton's epistles which constitute so large a part of the story.

Evidently they are the letters of a different person, as well as a more attractive one, than Mrs. Foster's heroine. Then, too, Mrs. Foster's tale has something of the effect of a tract, of a moral effort. She is driving home an ethical lesson and Eliza is the example to be shunned, whereas modern speculation, grown more tolerant, is apt to question the pre-judgment which guided the novelist's pen. He who today seeks to penetrate the old secret realizes that he is furnished with only half of the evidence. On that incomplete data how can a verdict of condemnation be fairly based? Elizabeth's own story has never been told.

Nevertheless, here, for what it is worth, is Mrs. Foster's notion, adapted to her fictional purposes, of the kind of person the real Elizabeth was, and from this reflection, faint and clouded though it may be, of a genuine and appealing character, the old novel today gathers its greatest interest. For against the somewhat

somber background of her New England period this Hartford girl stands forth with a flash of brilliancy and charm. In the midst of a somewhat limited and narrow social life, she was an individualist, an exotic. In contrast with her Puritan environment she seems almost Hellenic —yet one fancies that there is something about her more Gallic than Greek.

She was the eldest of the three daughters of the Rev. Elnathan Whitman, D.D., a Fellow of Yale College, and pastor from 1732 till his death in 1777 of the Second Church in Hartford. It is a singular coincidence that through her mother, born Abigail Stanley, she traced kinship to the Charlotte Stanley who was the original of "Charlotte Temple." Her father was a grandson of that noted divine, Solomon Stoddard of Northampton, who, it will be remembered, was the grandfather of Jonathan Edwards. John Trumbull, the poet and judge, was a cousin and so was Aaron Burr. Besides these, the Pierreponts, the Whitneys, the Ogdens, the Russells, the Wadsworths, were all kin or connected by marriage.

Fairly early in life Elizabeth became engaged to be married to the Rev. Joseph Howe, a Yale

graduate, and for a while a tutor at the college, whose chief pastorate was at the New South Church in Boston. During the siege he was compelled to flee from the city and, his health failing, he died at Hartford, probably in 1776.

In that rare volume, "American Poems, Selected and Original," published at Litchfield, 1793, is "An Ode, Addressed to Miss—. By the late Rev. Joseph Howe, of Boston." Its occasion was the departure, by sea, of the young woman to whom it was addressed.

> "Nor less to heaven did I prefer,
> For thy dear sake, my pious prayer.
> O winds, O waves, agree!
> Winds gently blow, waves softly flow,
> Ship move with care, for thou dost bear
> The better part of me."

It is possible, indeed probable, that Elizabeth Whitman, who visited occasionally in Boston, inspired these lines, but it appears that on her part this love affair was of only moderate intensity and that her father's death, which occurred in the year following the death of her betrothed, affected her far more than that of the young minister she was to have married.

Not long after Mr. Whitman died, while Elizabeth was visiting in New Haven at the home of Dr. Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College, whose daughter Betsy was her intimate friend, her second love affair developed.

The Rev. Joseph Buckminster was also a Yale graduate and tutor, later settling at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in Dr. Stiles's old parish, where his life was spent. He was considered an exceptionally brilliant and promising young man and he seems to have loved and wooed Elizabeth ardently. It appears that she had a deep affection for him, but also an intense dread of the harrowing melancholia from which he at times suffered. There is an intimation, too, as to her own growing doubts of future happiness in the somewhat limited rôle of a New England minister's wife. Would her free and eager spirit find satisfaction in a lifetime of parochial routine? She was discussing her final decision in this matter with her cousin Jeremiah Wadsworth in the arbor of her mother's garden when Buckminster, who did not like Colonel Wadsworth, suddenly appeared and, misunderstanding the situation, went away in great anger.

Are the following lines from a letter of Eliza-

beth to Joel Barlow, written at Hartford, February 19, 1779, references to this affair?

" . . . . to find yourself quite out of Ambition's way, and in the very bosom of content,—this certainly is agreeable, and never more than when one has met with trouble in a busier place. I felt myself no longer afraid when a certain subject was started. I neither trembled nor turned pale, but sat at my ease and felt as if nobody would hurt me. I know you will laugh at me for a pusillanimous creature for being ever so afraid as you have seen me; but I cannot help it . . . .

"As to Mr. Baldwin, if he were at the door, I would not run into the cupboard to avoid him. He may mean well, in writing all to Buckminster and nothing to me; but I do not think it."

After the encounter in the garden Elizabeth wrote Buckminster explaining the matter, and, we may infer, telling him that her decision would have been unfavorable. His reply was the announcement of his approaching marriage, but in spite of this rapid *volte face* he is said to have cherished Elizabeth's memory during all of his life. Mrs. Dall in her "Romance of the Association" tells the story of his burning the first copy of "The Coquette" he read, which he found on a parishioner's table. "It ought never to have been written," he said, "and shall

never be read—at least, not in my parish. Bid the ladies take notice, wherever I find a copy I shall treat it in the same way."

Familiar letters are always a fairly clear indication of character, and it is from these letters of Elizabeth Whitman, printed in part in her little book by Mrs. Dall, that we may obtain our most direct knowledge of her personality. After reading them one closes the book with the conviction that here was a rare and lovely woman. Here is wit, orginality, sympathy —one is almost tempted to say a certain tenderness — encouragement, good sense and good advice. The writer obviously had that quality that will forever be wholly captivating to the masculine mind—the ability to enter wholeheartedly into the aspirations and ambitions of a friend, to make them her own, and to supply the comforting assurance and admiration that the male sex so frequently craves and that is so often the spur to high endeavor. There is something very winning about this affectionate sympathy as displayed in these old letters, all, with one exception, written to Joel Barlow at the time when he was striving for accomplishment and recognition as a poet. Yet the writer's

praise is not blind or overdone, for she does not hesitate to criticise adversely, though in a most engaging way, some of Barlow's verses that he sends to her for her comment:

"There are so many beauties in your elegies, that it looks like envy or ill-nature to pass them and dwell upon the few faults; but you know that I do not leave them unnoticed or unadmired. If you will have me find fault, I can do it in a few instances with the expression. The sentiments are everywhere beautiful, just and above all criticism. . . . . Why are you gloomy? You must not be. Expect everything, hope everything, and *do* everything to make your circumstances agreeable."

Perhaps Elizabeth did not feel incompetent to assume the rôle of a critic and literary adviser, for she herself had the true artist's desire for self-expression and this found relief in her own poetry which usually took the form of the heroic couplet.

It is inevitable that the reader of these letters should ask himself: Was there anything more than friendship between Barlow and Elizabeth? Doubtless the answer is in the negative. When Elizabeth Whitman first met the poet he was engaged to be married to Ruth Baldwin who always remained one of Elizabeth's closest

friends and who through all of Barlow's strange career was his faithful and beloved wife. Yet it is evident that in his correspondent Barlow's wavering and self-centered spirit found a steadying and assuring solace that he could never have forgotten. Is it possible that he knew the secret of the final mystery?

Of love affairs, other than those here indicated, that may have transpired in Elizabeth's experience before the catastrophe, we know little or nothing. No doubt certain emotional adventures occurred as the years passed. She was exceptionally cultivated and entertaining and all accounts agree that she was beautiful, though her exact type of beauty is a matter of speculation, for her portrait which for years after her death hung in her old home was destroyed in 1831, when the house was burned—perhaps with much memoranda which would have given us a clue to her secret.

The following well-rounded sentence from Mrs. Locke's historically inaccurate but emotionally true preface to the edition of 1866 of "The Coquette" is not without its character-illuminating quality. "By her exceeding personal beauty and accomplishments," wrote Mrs.

Locke of Elizabeth, of whose personality she seems to have had some reliable evidence, "added to the wealth of her mind, she attracted to her sphere the grave and the gay, the learned and the witty, the worshippers of the beautiful, with those who reverently bend before all inner graces."

For a young woman of the period her life was reasonably varied and her acquaintance extensive. At President Stiles's home, and elsewhere in New Haven, where she often visited, she met many men of distinction. She and Betsy Stiles both spoke French fluently and it is said that Elizabeth was greatly admired by several of the French officers who had known Dr. Stiles at Newport and who called upon him from time to time at New Haven. Certain, it must be confessed rather indefinite, "foreign secretaries" are alleged to have fallen victims to her charms.

There is an intimation that after her father's death she did not always find life at home congenial. This is an inference—though not entirely an inference—that one may readily accept. There was an irony in the fate that placed this vivid creature in a New England parsonage in the last half of the eighteenth century. Paris

or Florence in the days of the Renaissance—in such a setting one can visualize her. But, alas! there was little in common between the New England of 1780 and the France or Italy of three hundred years before.

And yet one thing was common—as it is common wherever individuals of the human race abide. When the great passion overwhelmed her and swept her away from all that she had known to a mysterious end, Elizabeth Whitman was no longer a young girl. She was a woman of experience, knowing the ways of her world as well as any one of her day and time. The love that broke down all restraints, that surrendered everything, that threw the world away, was no ordinary affair of the heart. It was, in truth, the irresistible, the incredible, the historic passion. It was of a piece with the substance of which the great dramas of the world are made and against the New England scene it now became the motif of a tragedy.

On a day late in May, 1788, Elizabeth took the stage at Hartford for Boston where she was to visit her friend, Mrs. Henry Hill. No doubt her family knew that something was wrong. They knew, among other things, that she had

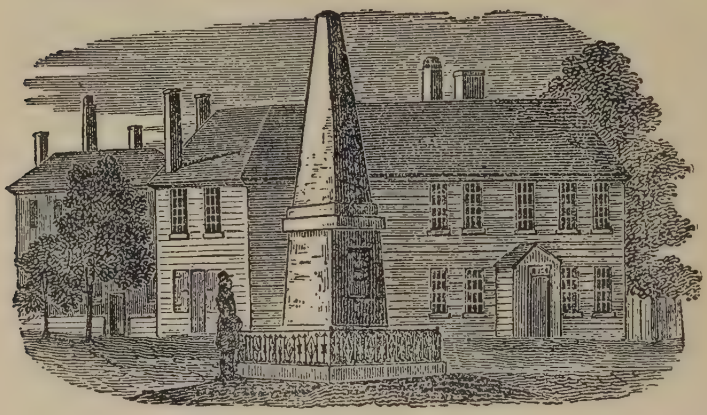
spent all the preceding night alone in the starlight on the roof of William Lawrence's house on the north side of the old State House square. It was a strange proceeding, but their daughter and sister was, after all, a strange, temperamental creature whose impulses and mental processes they seldom understood and frequently disapproved. Of how much more they were aware we do not know—they must have had their suspicions—but at least they were ignorant of her purpose in her journey. From the moment when she drove away in the stage neither they nor any one of her Hartford friends saw her again —nor did she reach her destination.

On Tuesday, July 29, 1788, the Salem "Mercury" printed the following notice:

"Last Friday, a female stranger died at the Bell Tavern, in Danvers; and on Sunday her remains were decently interred. The circumstances relative to this woman are such as to excite curiosity, and interest our feelings. She was brought to the Bell in a chaise, from Watertown, as she said, by a young man whom she had engaged for that purpose. After she had alighted, and taken a trunk with her into the house, the chaise immediately drove off. She remained at this inn till her death, in expectation of the arrival of her husband, whom she expected to come for her, and appeared anxious at his delay. She was averse to

being interrogated concerning herself or connections; and kept much retired to her chamber, employed in needlework, writing, etc. She said, however, that she came from Westfield [Wethersfield?], in Connecticut; that her parents lived in that state; that she had been married only a few months; and that her husband's name was Thomas Walker,—but always carefully concealed her family name. Her linen was all marked E. W. About a fortnight before her death, she was brought to bed of a lifeless child. When those who attended her apprehended her fate, they asked her, whether she did not wish to see her friends. She answered, that she was very desirous of seeing them. It was proposed that she should send for them; to which she objected, hoping in a short time to be able to go to them. From what she said, and from other circumstances, it appeared probable to those who attended her, that she belonged to some country town in Connecticut: Her conversation, her writings, and her manners, bespoke the advantage of a respectable family and good education. Her person was agreeable; her deportment, amiable and engaging; and, though in a state of anxiety, and suspense, she preserved a cheerfulness which seemed to be not the effect of insensibility, but of a firm and patient temper. She was supposed to be about 35 years old. Copies of letters, of her writing, dated at Hartford, Springfield, and other places, were left among her things. This account is given by the family in which she resided; and it is hoped that the publication of it will be a means of ascertaining her friends of her fate."

The hope of the editor of the "Mercury" was realized. This notice, coming to the attention of Mrs. Hill, finally resulted in the identification of the mysterious lady of the Bell Tavern as Elizabeth Whitman.



Monument and Bell Tavern, Danvers.

And that, really, is the whole story. The succinct newspaper statement, with its contemporary note and its effect of reality, furnishes a more effective climax than the phrases of any modern chronicler.

Yet one cannot quite close the record without mention of a few incidents of the last days.

The copies of letters mentioned as found among Elizabeth's belongings evidently escaped her, for,

fearful of the outcome of her illness, she burned, as she supposed, all her papers. A poem and part of a letter, both clearly addressed to her lover or husband, though no name was given, escaped her.

"Must I die alone?" she wrote in those final days. "Shall I never see you more? I know that you will come, but you will come too late: This is, I fear, my last ability. Tears fall so, I know not how to write. Why did you leave me in so much distress? But I will not reproach you: All that was dear I left for you: but do not regret it.—May God forgive in both what was amiss:—When I go from hence, I will leave you some way to find me;—if I die, will you come and drop a tear over my grave?"

There is a legend, perhaps apocryphal, that one afternoon she wrote in chalk on the inn door, or on the flagging before it, her initials or other sign, which a small boy rubbed out without her knowledge. That evening, the legend runs, an officer in uniform rode into the town on horseback looking carefully at all the doors and walks, but speaking to no one. Not finding what he evidently sought, he is said to have ridden despondently away.

During all her stay at Danvers, Elizabeth wore a wedding ring and at her request it was buried with her.

As to the identity of the man whom Elizabeth loved there have been many speculations. A cousin of hers, an able man, distinguished in the history of his time, has often been assumed to have been the cause of her tragedy, but it is fair to his memory to say that he denied this assumption vehemently. The late Charles Hoadly, State Librarian of Connecticut, had a theory that the man was a prominent member of the Yale class of 1776, but no evidence for this belief is given. Another supposition is that Elizabeth, against the wishes of her family, had contracted a marriage with a French Romanist who, had he acknowledged this union, would have forfeited his inheritance. Probably Jeremiah Wadsworth, who was her friend and adviser, knew the secret, but if so it perished with him.

Her brother William, who was eight years younger than she, long survived her, dying in Hartford on Christmas Day, 1846, at the age of eighty-six. In the old man, who was one of the last in his city to wear the knee breeches of the preceding century, it would have been difficult to recognize Elizabeth's "little rogue of a brother" whom she frequently commended

to Joel Barlow's care while at Yale. Through a slight knowledge of medicine he acquired the title of "Doctor," but he was also admitted to the bar and for some time was Town Clerk, and Clerk of the City Court. In his later years he became something of an antiquary and after the Wadsworth Atheneum was built he found in that castellated home of the humanities, particularly in the library, a grateful refuge from the world, where he was always ready to converse with other visitors upon incidents of days long gone by. One subject, however, was universally accepted as unapproachable. With his son, who died unmarried in Philadelphia in 1875, the line of the Rev. Elnathan Whitman became extinct.

After Elizabeth's death her brother is not known to have mentioned her name outside of the family, but for many years he made an annual pilgrimage to her grave with his sister Abigail. The letter of an old resident tells us that after Elizabeth died the door of her room in the Whitman home was kept locked and nothing disturbed till fire destroyed the building.

III: The Hemans of America

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IN 1866, the year after her death, Timothy Dwight, later beloved president of Yale University, contributed to "The New Englander" an article on Mrs. Sigourney in the form of a review of her posthumous autobiography, entitled "Letters of Life." This article deserves to be remembered because, for one thing, it reflects from its author's mind a sense of humor which Mrs. Sigourney never, even in her most inspired moments, displayed.

We all recall the old story of the Hartford personage who achieved a certain measure of fame by remarking that Mrs. Sigourney's personal obituary poems had added a new terror to death. Dr. Dwight's paper begins with a reference to this same phase of the poetess.

"Whenever any person has died in our country," he says, "during the last score of years, who was of public reputation sufficient to

justify it . . . a kind of calm and peaceful confidence has rested in our minds, that, within a brief season, a poetical obituary would appear in the public prints from the well-known pen of Mrs. Sigourney. Indeed so general has been this confidence among the people of Connecticut, that some persons, who, from peculiar modesty or from some other reason, have desired to escape the notice of the great world after death, have been beset by a kind of perpetual fear that she might survive them, and thus, having them at a great disadvantage, might send out their names unto all the earth."

And later on in the essay he mentions the reported story of the man who was unwilling to travel from New Haven to Hartford on the same train with the distinguished Hartford lady lest in case of a railroad accident she might put him into rhyme.

Though it is doubtful if the author of "The Anthology of Spoon River" ever heard of these obituary poems, they form a strange precedent for that original collection of verse. Some of them were gathered by their authoress in a volume entitled "The Man of Uz, and Other Poems," published at Hartford in 1862, where the literary

antiquarian may still peruse them. If they originally possessed any poetry it is now extinct, and the only interest remaining is the personal one. To those for whom the older Hartford still has its appeal such names as those of Colonel Samuel Colt, Samuel Tudor, "The Brothers Buell," Harvey Seymour, D. F. Robinson, Judge Thomas S. Willaims, Deacon Normand Smith, Governor Joseph Trumbull, and Mary Shipman Deming —to mention only a few—have their memories and possibly their family associations.

Perhaps it is not strange that such a considerable part of Mrs. Sigourney's facile effusions related to the tomb for hers was the age of pensive sentiment. It was the time when the weeping willow was popular in all forms of art, from the tombstone to the mezzotint illustration, when young ladies sang captivatingly, to the harp, of an early death, when funeral sermons were printed, widely circulated and even read, and when everybody was wondering whether they were numbered among the "elect" or—not.

Yet it would be a mistake to give the impression that all the sentiment of the time, or all of Mrs. Sigourney's poetry, partook of gloom. Far

from it. Though there was, to be sure, a kind of background of agreeable melancholy, and such alluring titles of her books as "Whisper to a Bride" and "Water Drops" (a plea for temperance) were doubtless not intentionally humorous, Mrs. Sigourney could be playful at times and she invariably painted the immediate scene in colors of the rose. She was, in fact, an idealist. She so far idealized her early surroundings in Norwich, where she was born, that Dr. Dwight, who also knew Norwich in his boyhood, finds difficulty in identifying places and people. She even idealized the Park River, sometimes known in her day, as in ours, by a less euphonious title, alluding to it as "the fair river that girdled the domain [her home on what is now known as Asylum Hill] from which it was protected by a mural parapet." Who other than Mrs. Sigourney could have transformed an ordinary stone wall into a "mural parapet"?

Speaking of the Park River, Mrs. Sigourney, in the course of describing the pastoral surroundings of what was then her country home, confesses that she could never understand why pigs were unmentionable in polite society—though we think she herself refrained from

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referring to them by their ordinary term. "Such treatment," she asserts "is peculiarly ungrateful in a people who allow this scorned creature to furnish a large part of their subsistence, to swell the gains of commerce and to share with the monarch of ocean the honor of lighting the evening lamp."

Here are two other references, quoted by Dr. Dwight, to this rural "domain" of which the dwelling house, it will be remembered, is still standing:

"Two fair cows, with coats brushed to a satin sleekness, ruminated at will, and filled large pails with creamy nectar."

And again, the poultry "munificently gave us their eggs, their offspring and themselves."

But even this idealized Sabine farm was not exempt from the troubles that lie in wait for all of us, and we must be chivalrous enough to admit that Mrs. Sigourney bore the sorrows that came to her with grace and dignity. Soon after the poetess and her husband took up their residence here Mr. Sigourney was overtaken by business troubles, which his wife translates into "obstructions in the course of mercantile prosperity," and she cheerfully undertook va-

rious economies, among which was "prolonging the existence of garments by transmigration." Later the family moved to a less pretentious home on High street where the latter part of the life of Mrs. Sigourney, who survived her husband, was spent.

Later still this house became a kind of shrine, and a distinguished Yale teacher and poet, whose people, back in his undergraduate days of the sixties, dwelt for a time in the poetess's old home, has told the writer how nice old ladies from the country used to make pilgrimages thither to pluck a spray of lilac from the garden where the poetess was wont to walk and to see the room where she "mused."

The fact is that she appears to have dwelt in a world of the mind that, however real to her, was in reality distinctly artificial, like most of her poetic writings. In these faded verses there now appears to be little real thought, still less real poetry. The only stanzas about which any flavor of poetic eloquence still clings are those entitled "The Return of Napoleon from St. Helena" and "Indian Names." Compare her "Niagara" and "The Indian Summer" with the poems on the same subjects by J. G. C. Brain-

ard, another now almost forgotten Hartford poet of her time, whose early death prevented the flowering of a fame that was just beginning to unfold, and the reader grasps at once the difference between a certain graceful turn of thought and facility of phrase on the one hand, and genuine poetic genius on the other.

And yet in her day she had a prodigious vogue and the reference to her as "The Hemans of America," while now holding a certain facetious implication, was gravely accepted at the time. Her journey abroad after her husband's death was in its way a sort of mild ovation. She met Queen Victoria and it is significant as well as amusing to find that our Hartford citizeness alluded to the Queen as "a sister woman." Her verses were translated into several languages and she received presents and letters of commendation from the King of Prussia, the Empress of Russia and the Queen of France.

The explanation of her contemporary popularity must lie in the state of mind of the period. In that era "sensibility" was the passport to literary success and Mrs. Sigourney certainly possessed sensibility, if nothing else, to a high degree. Those sentimental, yearly gift books

LYDIA HUNTLEY SIGOURNEY

FROM A MINIATURE IN THE COLT COLLECTION
BY PERMISSION OF THE WADSWORTH ATHENEUM

known as "annuals" were a phenomenon of the time, and no "annual" was complete without one or more of her poems. It is time that some qualified person gave to the world a study of this old "annual" literature, so sentimental, so romantic, and so generally languishing. The most delightful appreciation that comes to mind at the moment, of the "annual" as a literary curio is contained in Professor Beers's life of Willis in the American Men of Letters series—or in his essay on Percival in "The Ways of Yale."

There is a certain pathos in the fact that the years have denied this Hartford poetess's gentle claim to immortality, because the impossibility of granting this claim has led the world to neglect two very definite and admirable characteristics she possessed.

One is that she was a remarkably good woman. She carried her Christian precepts into her daily practice in a way that few of us seem to succeed in doing. In spite of a little harmless vanity, everyone who came in contact with her appears to have admired and loved her.

In the social life of the old city she was a leading and popular figure. Samuel G. Goodrich in his "Recollections of a Life Time" describing

Hartford in the second decade of the nineteenth century says of Mrs. Sigourney, then Miss Huntley: "Noiselessly and gracefully she glided into our social circle and ere long was its presiding genius . . . . Mingling in the gayeties of our social gatherings and in no respect clouding their festivity, she led us all toward intellectual pursuits and amusements. We had even a literary cotery under her inspiration, its first meetings being held at Mr. Wadsworth's." Before the writer lie a half dozen of Mrs. Sigourney's letters written in her distinct and regular handwriting. They relate to business matters, to social engagements, and a few are letters of consolation. Perhaps they seem a little stilted and formal, but in all the personal notes there is evident a very genuine and very charming spirit of sympathy and kindliness.

The other trait that has been largely forgotten is that she was a natural teacher of youth. In her early days in Hartford she conducted a school for girls on singularly successful and somewhat original lines. This she relinquished on her marriage, but for nearly half a century those of her old pupils who lived never failed to meet annually with her in remembrance of their early

association. Clearly, she inspired in them all an ardent and lasting affection.

On the writer's desk, among her letters, lies an ancient school copy-book containing the transcript of an address she made to her old scholars August 17, 1822, "on their meeting to form a Charitable and Literary Society." It is characteristic that the greater part of this composition is concerned with affectionate and what now seem rather pathetic sketches of the five young girls of her flock who had died. The address confirms what we know from other sources—that her school was started in 1814, soon after she came from Norwich to Hartford.

The old manuscript abounds in unimpeachable moral aphorisms. One may, perhaps, smile at the carefully balanced phraseology of this: "Some sciences are more attractive to ambition, more congenial with fame, more omnipotent over wealth, but I know of none so closely connected with happiness as the science of doing good." Yet most of us would be better men and women if we applied that maxim in our lives as constantly as did this gentle "lady of old years." In her teaching "the science of doing good" was not a theoretical matter alone. It

was directed to practical ends. "During a period of somewhat less than two years and a half," she says, "you completed for the poor 160 garments of different descriptions, many of which were carefully altered and repaired from your own—among them 35 pairs of stockings, knit without sacrifice of time during the afternoon reading and recitation of history. You likewise contributed ten dollars to the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, five dollars to the schools then established among the Cherokees, and distributed religious books to an amount exceeding ten dollars, among the children of poverty and ignorance . . . . Some of you were accustomed to gain time for these extra employments by rising an hour earlier in the morning."

Had Mrs. Sigourney continued her school it is not by any means preposterous to believe that her fame as an educator might have outlasted her reputation in literature, and that she might have shared with Miss Beecher of the old Hartford Female Seminary a certain degree of distinction in connection with the early education of women in this country.

IV: Whom the Gods Love

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IN the year 1822 there drifted into the friendly social life of the old town a short, odd looking young man who, it developed, had come to take editorial charge of "The Connecticut Mirror," a weekly newspaper, strongly federal in politics, which had been established in 1809 by Charles Hosmer and which, at this time, had just been bought by Messrs. Goodsell and Wells, whose place of business was at the corner of Main and Asylum streets.

The name of this young man was John Gardiner Calkins Brainard and he was twenty-six years old. Those who inquired about him learned that he was a native of New London and the son of Judge Jeremiah G. Brainard of the Superior Court. In 1815 he had been graduated at Yale —a classmate of that strange genius James Gates Percival, poet, physician, geologist. After studying law in his brother's office he had prac-

ticed for a time in Middletown, but it was rumored that his tastes were literary rather than legal, and that the law had not proved very successful.

In spite of his rather uncouth appearance this newcomer soon became a favorite among the young people. He was clever—any one could see that. His frequent witty and amusing sayings gathered an arresting emphasis from their contrast with intervals of quietness and even of apparent depression. Perhaps this hint of an underlying seriousness had its especial charm for the young ladies. Remember that in those days Byron was in fashion. But there was something about this young man that attracted also friends of his own sex, "The first time I ever saw him," says a writer in the "Boston Statesman," quoted by Whittier in his memoir of Brainard, "I met him in a gay and fashionable circle. He was pointed out to me as the poet Brainard—a plain, ordinary looking individual, careless in his dress, and apparently without the least claim to the attention of those who value such advantages (?). But there was no person there so much or so flatteringly attended to. . . . . He was evidently the idol, not only of the poetry-loving

and gentler sex—but also of the young men who were about him. . . . ."

We can picture young Mr. Brainard as one of the leading figures in that "literary cotery," which Goodrich describes and which was presided over by Mrs. Sigourney. It was in a room adjoining Goodrich's at Ripley's Tavern that Brainard soon took up his abode and the two became fast friends.

The discovery was soon made that young Mr. Brainard was by way of being a poet—if, indeed, the fact was not already known. Verses, obviously from his pen, appeared constantly in his newspaper. Indeed some of the paper's readers may have recognized the new editor's hand through their familiarity with the verse he had sometimes written for the "Mirror" before his official connection with that journal. His first contribution to the paper in his new capacity appeared in the issue for February 25, 1822, in which the change of ownership and the new editor were announced. This contribution was in the form of a poem "On the Birthday of Washington."—"Behold the moss'd cornerstone drop-p'd from the wall," ran the first line. It was not a great poem, but it sounded a sincere, patriotic

note, had a genuine poetic touch and far excelled most newspaper verse of the day.

And so this original young man, with his light brown hair, rather pale face, large eyes and obvious "temperament" began to acquire the character and reputation of a poet. We fancy that this reputation was somewhat limited until on a sudden impulse he wrote "The Fall of Niagara." This piece of blank verse, though now largely forgotten in the lapse of years, had in its time a tremendous vogue. It was copied far and wide, took its place in school readers and for years was declaimed by youthful orators before committees and admiring parents at school exhibitions.

We do not know the exact date of its composition, but it must have been before 1825, for it appeared in the author's first collection of verse published in that year. It was written one raw March evening in an emergency, to make copy for the next morning's paper. Goodrich tells the story. Brainard was half ill with a cold and Goodrich went over with him to the "Mirror" office and started a fire in the Franklin stove, while his companion, miserable and depressed, talked at random, abhorring the compulsion that

made writing a necessity and his procrastination that had postponed his work, till the last moment.

"Some time passed," says Goodrich, "in similar talk, when at last Brainard turned suddenly, took up his pen and began to write. I sat apart and left him to his work. Some twenty minutes passed, when, with a radiant smile on his face, he got up, approached the fire, and, taking the candle to light his paper, he read as follows:

THE FALL OF NIAGARA.

'The thoughts are strange that crowd into my brain,
While I look upward to thee. It would seem
As if God pour'd thee from his 'hollow hand.'
And hung his bow upon thy awful front;
And spoke in that loud voice, which seem'd to him
Who dwelt in Patmos for his Saviour's sake,
'The sound of many waters'; and had bade
Thy flood to chronicle the ages back.
And notch his cent'ries in the eternal rocks.'

"He had hardly done reading when the [printer's] boy came. Brainard handed him the lines—on a small scrap of rather coarse paper—and told him to come again in half an hour. Before this time had elapsed, he had finished, and read me the following stanza:

'Deep calleth unto deep. And what are we,
That hear the question of that voice sublime?
Oh, what are all the notes that ever rung
From war's vain trumpet by thy thundering side?

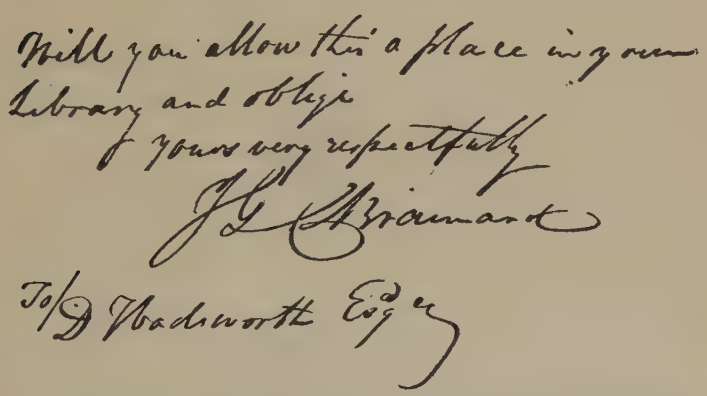
Yea, what is all the riot man can make,
In his short life, to thy unceasing roar?
And yet, bold babbler, what art thou to Him
Who drown'd a world, and heap'd the waters far
Above its loftiest mountains?—a light wave,
That breathes and whispers of its Maker's might.'

"These lines having been furnished, Brainard left his office and we returned to Miss Lucy's parlor. He seemed utterly unconscious of what he had done . . . . The lines went forth and produced a sensation of delight over the whole country."

It is not too much to say that Niagara brought Brainard fame. To the modern ear inured to free verse its lines may sound perhaps a trifle over sonorous and formal. But it has real poetic eloquence and inspiration. Brainard had never been within less than five hundred miles of the great falls.

The Niagara is the first poem in that collection of the poet's verses published in 1825, alluded to above. Before the writer at the moment lies a copy of this rather rare volume. Goodrich arranged for its publication with Bliss and White of New York and with difficulty persuaded Brainard to do the necessary work of collection and revision. It was the only collection

of his verses that was published during the poet's life. Two others were issued after his death—one in 1832, with a memoir by Whittier, and one, with a prefatory sketch by the Rev. Dr. Robbins, in 1842. The copy of the first collection, now on the writer's desk, bears on the fly-leaf this inscription in the author's handwriting:



Will you allow this a place in your
Library and oblige
Yours very respectfully
J. G. Brainard
To/ D. Wadsworth Esq.

The thin little book has the title, "Occasional Pieces of Poetry," which is peculiarly appropriate, for most of Brainard's poems were suggested by incidents of daily life that came to his attention. For example, the stage coach from Hartford to New Haven falls through a bridge and two lives are lost—the occurrence prompts him to write the "Lines on a Melancholy Acci-

dent;" the visit of Lafayette to this country in 1824 occasions some verses to "the only surviving general of the Revolution;" the death of two persons who were struck by lightning during a religious service in Montville suggests "The Thunder Storm;" the humorous verses entitled "The Captain" result from the genuinely amusing situation that arose in New London harbor when the wreck of the Norwich Methodist meeting house, that had come down the river in a freshet, collided with an anchored schooner.

The fact that the poet took many every-day affairs as the immediate occasion for his versifying accounts for the trivial character of some of his work. On the other hand it illustrates the theory he held of the need of a genuine American literature. Though he read eagerly Byron and Scott, he deprecated in the columns of the "Mirror" the imitation of foreign writers by American men of letters, holding that our own history, traditions and environment gave inspiration enough.

He welcomed the appearance of Cooper with enthusiasm, and a story which ran in the "Mirror" under the title of "Letters from Fort

OCCASIONAL

PIECES OF POETRY.

BY JOHN G. C. BRAINARD.

Some said, "John, print it;" others said, "Not so;"—
Some said, "It might do good;" others said, "No."

Bunyan's Apology.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED FOR E. BLISS AND E. WHITE.

Clayton & Van Norden, Printers.

1825.

Braddock" and which was largely in the Cooper manner was written by him though published anonymously. Indeed a great part of his work dealt with local matters. "Matchit Moodus" expresses a fantastic legend of the "Moodus noises." "The Black Fox of Salmon River" embodies in verse another grim local tradition. "The Shad Spirit" and "Lines to the Connecticut River" are other similar examples of his use of the folk-lore of the Connecticut valley.

Professor Beers of Yale cites the exquisite little lyric beginning "The dead leaves strew the forest walk," as about the best example of his work. Goodrich says it was written after the departure from Hartford of a young lady from Savannah to whom the poet had been devoted during her visit. Very attractive, too, are the lines on "Indian Summer." The blank verse entitled "The Invalid on the East End of Long Island," has a melancholy note but deserves remembrance. It was there that Brainard spent the few weeks just before the end.

He was too sensitive and unaggressive a soul both for the law and for the political wrangling which attended the newspaper controversies of the day. In the practical life of his country and

his time, which had small place for artistic aspiration or expression, he was an anomaly simply because he was a real poet. To this situation may be attributed no doubt in large measure the sense of failure, unquestionably exaggerated, which he often expressed. "Don't expect too much of me," he said to Goodrich at their first meeting, "I never succeeded in anything yet. I could never draw a mug of cider without spilling more than half of it."

His frequent depression, however, was not all temperament—it had a physical basis. In the spring of 1827 incipient tuberculosis compelled him to give up his work on the "Mirror," and on September 26, 1828, a month before his thirty-second birthday, he died at his home in New London.

His death called forth the customary poetic obituary from his friend Mrs. Sigourney—one of the best she ever wrote—voicing a sincere and generous appreciation. Whittier, with other poets of the day, added his word of memory and praise. Perhaps a line from Snelling best expresses in a few words the whole story—

"The falchion's temper ate the scabbard through."

V: An Eccentric Visitor

V: An Eccentric Visitor

WE may be permitted to take a certain pride in the fact that most strangers who sojourn for a time among us express admiration and liking for the town. There has been, however, one historic and notable exception. A young man named Percival who visited us in 1815, the year of his graduation from Yale College, did not care for Hartford at all and, moreover, did not hesitate to proclaim his distaste in some of the verses he was then engaged in writing. However, poor Percival did not like any spot very well. It is with a sense of faint amusement or, when we know his history, of compassion, rather than with any shade of resentment, that we now read the stanzas in which he published his sentiments to an unappreciative world:

"Ismir! Fare thee well forever!
From thy walls with joy I go,
Every tie I freely sever,
Flying from thy den of woe.

* * * *

Ismir! Land of cursed deceivers,
Where the sons of darkness dwell
Hope, the cherub's base bereavers,—
Hateful city! Fare thee well."

When he wrote this James Gates Percival was twenty years old. Some of the emotion of these lines arose simply from uncurbed youthful reaction from disappointment. Most of it, however, was individual and characteristic temperament—the same uncomfortable mental constitution that seemed to make it impossible for him to withhold the vitriolic verses he wrote and printed on the character of a clergyman who had objected to Percival's suit for his daughter's hand.

The young poet had come to Hartford on the invitation of his classmate, Horace Hooker, who later entered the ministry and whose wife wrote for the young a number of very instructive and very pious stories which in their day attained a considerable popularity. It was hoped that in the literary atmosphere which at that time existed in Hartford this odd young man, with his undoubted poetic strain and his dreamy and contemplative nature, would find a congenial milieu.

The visit, however, was a failure. Young Percival was not popular. "He was too shy and modest," says his biographer, "to adapt himself to different circles. He wanted confidence, and at social gatherings [in Hartford] he talked at great length on single subjects, but in so low a tone that people could not hear him. He was not treated as he expected to be; it seemed to him that he was not appreciated, and he came away in disgust."

This charge against us of lack of appreciation finds some mitigation in the fact that the poet departed from many places in the same frame of mind and for the same reason. Percival was one of those pathetic spirits who find the world an unhappy abiding place. His constitutional wretchedness was in fact so extreme that he is said in early life to have attempted self-destruction and one of his best poems, as well as one of the gloomiest in the language, reflects his moods at this period under the title of "The Suicide."

Fortune aggravated the disadvantage of one unfitted at the best to cope with the world by allotting to him a life of penury. For many years he lived as a recluse in the State Hospital Building in New Haven where he was allowed the use

of three rooms which he never permitted visitors to enter—on one occasion even refusing to admit Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. It is related that at another time a somewhat pompous gentleman, accompanied by two ladies, was visiting the building and, learning that the poet lived there, rapped at his door and then stood waiting, a lady on each side of him. The door opened a crack and Percival's face appeared. "I am extremely happy and rejoiced," began the visitor, with a great deal of manner, "that I have the honor of addressing the poet Percival —" But he got no further, for Percival instantly ejaculated "Boo!" and slammed the door. This seems to have been his customary manner of excusing himself to callers.

Percival's lack of means was in a way his own fault—or at least it was the result of his peculiar disposition which, in its sensitiveness to purely imaginary slights and its impossibility of concession or adaptation, worked constantly against his prosperity. His friends were faithful and long-suffering and often came to the rescue. In spite of his oddities there seems to have been a singular charm about the man like the charm of an unexpectedly original child. When the bane

of an intense bashfulness was removed and he was alone with one or two intimates, his talk is said to have been delightful. He became absolutely absorbed in any topic in which he was interested and brought to bear upon it a wealth of allusion and comment of which few minds were capable.

As a poet he is now forgotten, yet it is a suggestive and significant fact that in 1828, when a project was in hand to publish a group picture of nine living American poets, Percival was to occupy the center of the stage, while such minor lights as Bryant, Irving and Halleck, with others, were to surround him.

But the fame he longed for and, with an almost childlike naïveté, claimed as his due, was short-lived. It barely touched him and passed him by. Yet he deserves remembrance, if only for his versatility. While it is chiefly as a poet that mention is made of him in encyclopedias and other books of reference, he was capable, but for his temperamental disabilities, of shining in many lines and in one pursuit other than poetry he has left a lasting memorial. He studied law, was admitted to the bar and never practiced. He served his medical apprenticeship under his

good friend Dr. Éli Ives of New Haven, took his degree, practiced a little and, though he was always afterward known as "Doctor," abandoned the profession—except that later in life he was post surgeon at Boston till his abhorrence of examining recruits compelled him to relinquish the work. At one time he thought of entering the ministry and he was always an authority on theology and dogma. He gave up his appointment as a professor of chemistry at the Military Academy at West Point because in going to his quarters he had to use the same hallway with other officers. He was a learned botanist and a linguist of rare attainments. In 1827 he carried through successfully the immense task of correcting the proofs and supervising the publication of Webster's unabridged dictionary—and seems to have been happier in this work of enormous detail than at any other time of his life.

But it was as a geologist that his most valuable practical work was done. His "Report on the Geology of Connecticut," published in 1842, was the result of five years of arduous labor and is a sufficient monument for any man.

"While engaged in this survey," he wrote, "I can confidently say that I have been labori-

ous and diligent. While traveling, it was my practice to rise early, in the longer days generally at dawn; in the shorter generally I got my breakfast and was on my way by daybreak. I continued, scarcely with any relaxation, as long as I had daylight and then was generally obliged to sit up till midnight, not unfrequently till one o'clock A. M. in order to complete my notes and arrange my specimens. This was continued, not only week after week, but month after month, almost without cessation."

Under the law Percival could not be paid till his report had been approved by the governor. It is characteristic of the whimsical geologist that he refused to submit to this approval by one whom he considered incompetent to pass upon his labors and it was only by the ruse of a friend who got possession of the report and presented it to the governor, who at once approved it, that Percival secured his pay.

This work brought Percival a high reputation as a geologist. He was engaged by the American Mining Company to investigate the lead deposits in Wisconsin and this in turn resulted in his employment by that state to make a geological survey similar to that of Connecticut. He

had made his first report and was engaged upon his second when he became ill and in May, 1856, he died and was buried in Hazel Green, Wisconsin. "Eminent as a Poet," runs his epitaph, "rarely accomplished as a Linguist, learned and acute in Science, a Man without Guile."

During his employment in Wisconsin his friends had bought a lot and built a house for him in New Haven. It was a queer structure, built after the poet's own plans, with the entrance at the rear, blind windows at the front, and of only one story in height. He was looking forward to spending here his last years, close to his college, with his few intimate friends, surrounded by his books. During an interval in his Wisconsin employment he came to New Haven to inspect his future home and is said to have broken down completely as he was compelled to leave by the duty that called him westward.

He was a strange creature, impossible to get along with, handicapped by an over-sensitiveness that led him into resentments that often held the implication of ingratitude, and with a constant grudge against the world. He should have been endowed and relieved of all the detail of life. Even then it is doubtful if he

would have produced great poetry, unless he had been rigorously trained by some dominant master to condense, revise and work over again and again his diffuse, sentimental and dreamy verses. A few of them retained for a time a certain vogue and then gradually passed into oblivion. Perhaps the two that were longest remembered were "To Seneca Lake" and "The Coral Grove." It is an odd thing, but some selections from a boyish effort entitled "Seasons of New England," hitherto generally cited as evidence of his youthful absurdities, would make excellent examples of the free verse that nowadays is taken so seriously. In this respect, at least, he was ahead of his time.

In his review of the "Life and Letters" Lowell seems rather dogmatic and intolerant, but with his inevitable insight and art of statement he crystalizes into one sentence the whole trouble with Percival. "He appears," writes Lowell, "as striking an example as could be found of the poetic temperament unballasted with those less obvious qualities which make the poetic faculty."

It should be recorded that children loved this old bachelor in spite of his eccentricities and that

with them he seemed to feel unrestrained and free, forgetting the shyness that formed an insuperable barrier to ready friendship with adults. In our Connecticut history he should not be forgotten and if any of the spirits of the departed revisit the glimpses of the moon this strange apparition ought sometimes to be met, driving his phantom buggy through forgotten lanes of the state he loved, or with his hammer and bag of specimens, climbing on foot the hills and ledges he knew so well.

VI: Who Was Peter Parley?

VI: Who Was Peter Parley?

IF your great-grandmother were living, dear reader, she would be appalled at your ignorance in propounding this question. Everybody knew the identity of "Peter Parley." In his day his name was as familiar a *nom de plume* as Mark Twain. He was, of course, Samuel G. Goodrich. And who—alas for the question!—was Samuel G. Goodrich?

"Ah, pensive scholar, what is fame?
A fitful tongue of leaping flame;
A giddy whirlwind's fickle gust,
That lifts a pinch of mortal dust;
A few swift years, and who can show
Which dust was Bill, and which was Joe?"

He does not deserve to be forgotten. Born at Ridgefield, Connecticut, in 1793, he died at New York City in 1860. For twenty-four hours his body lay in state in St. Bartholomew's Church where crowds passed his bier and at Southbury,

Connecticut, where he was buried, groups of children preceded the coffin and strewed flowers in its path.

It was a fitting and touching ceremony, for all his life he had been the friend of children. It was almost entirely for them that he wrote his two hundred books, of which he estimated, five years before his death, that seven million copies had then been sold, including, we assume, those editions that had been translated into nearly every modern language, even Greek and Persian.

Rummage among the top shelves of any old library and you will be pretty sure to discover some of these almost forgotten volumes—Parley's "Tales of the Sea," "Tales About the Sun, Moon and Stars," tales about New York, about ancient Rome, about Great Britain, about animals, about almost everything in this interesting world and outside of it. Of his "Natural History" George Du Maurier says—"Last, but not least of our library, was Peter Parley's 'Natural History,' of which we knew every word by heart," and a writer in the "Congregationalist" a quarter of a century ago ventured the opinion, "We have no doubt, were it needed, that 1,000 aged people could rise and repeat the

widely famous lines, 'The world is round and, like a ball, seems swinging in the air.' "

You will find as a frontispiece for some of these well worn books a picture of a kindly old gentleman in a cocked hat, with a crutch and a gouty foot, his pockets bulging with good things for children. This was the mythical "Peter Parley," and Goodrich tells an amusing story of how, during a visit in the South, his host's little grandson, after cautiously inspecting the visitor who had been introduced to him as Peter Parley, took his grandfather aside and warned him that the guest must be an impostor, for his foot wasn't bound up and he didn't walk with a crutch.

Perhaps in your search on the dusty shelves you will be fortunate enough to find a copy of Goodrich's verses entitled "The Outcast, and Other Poems," printed in 1841, or an odd number of "The Token," an "annual," which Goodrich published from 1828 till 1842 and in which were first given to the world some of the early productions of such young literary sparks as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

During the course of an eventful life Goodrich came into relations more or less intimate with

many famous people. A few of them, beside those just mentioned, were Daniel Webster (who had a great admiration for his writings), James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, Whittier, Jeffery, founder and editor of the Edinburgh Review, Sir Walter Scott and Lockhart his son-in-law and biographer. Goodrich was an eye-witness in Paris of the Revolution of '48 and he draws a vivid portrait of the third Napoleon on the eve of the Coup d'Etat. His daughter tells of an informal celebration in Florence, planned in his honor by Charles Lever, at which there were present the Brownings, the Tennysons, (she liked Frederic the best) the Storys, Gibson and Powers the sculptors, Lowell, Lamartine, Longfellow, Trollope, Buchanan Read and others —surely a brilliant company of which to be the center.

In London he was present at the ceremonies attendant upon the return of Byron's body from Greece. He heard Clay, Calhoun, John Randolph and other celebrities of the day speak in the Senate. He was a guest at levees at the White House and gives a dramatic account of a meeting there between Jackson and John Quincy Adams on the night of the former's defeat for

the presidency by the latter. He saw John Marshall presiding over the Supreme Court. He presents a minute description of President Monroe whom he encountered both at Washington and also at Hartford during a ceremony at the School for the Deaf, and whose personal appearance he thought far from prepossessing. In fact, there are few persons who attained distinction during the first half of the nineteenth century of whom the reader will not find an entertaining and graphic sketch in Goodrich's "Recollections of a Life Time."

It is a book well worth reading for not only is it written in an amusing and racy style and enlivened by anecdote and delightful comment, but it is a historic review of the politics, literature, international relations and social life of the time, put together by a writer eminently qualified for the task. We are chiefly concerned, however, with Goodrich's picture of life in the old town a century ago.

He came here as a youth of seventeen in 1811 and Hartford was his home, though he was frequently absent in Europe and elsewhere, till 1826 when he moved to Boston.

The city when he arrived was, he says, "a small commercial town, of four thousand inhabitants, dealing in lumber and smelling of molasses and Old Jamaica—for it had still some trade with the West Indies. . . . . There was a high tone of general intelligence and social respectability about the place, but it had not a single institution, a single monument that marked it as even a provincial metropolis of taste, in literature, art, or refinement." In this latter respect things were changed before he left. Trinity (then Washington) College, the American School for the Deaf, the Retreat for the Insane and other philanthropic and educational institutions were established during his residence in the provincial capital.

On his arrival he worked as a clerk in a dry goods store and his intimate friend was George Sheldon, "favored clerk" in the "ancient and honored firm" of Hudson & Goodwin, publishers of the "Connecticut Courant," Webster's Spelling Book, and much besides. Mr. Goodwin, of this firm, he describes as "a large, hale, comely old gentleman, of lively mind and cheerful manners. There was always sunshine in his bosom and wit upon his lip. He turned his hand to vari-

ous things, though chiefly to the newspaper, which was his pet. His heaven was the upper loft in the composition room; setting type had for him the sedative charms of knitting work to a country dame."

At the home of his uncle, Senator Chauncey Goodrich, he met all the prominent members of the famous "Hartford Convention," which finds in him a vigorous defender against the charge of unpatriotism.

During the War of 1812 he served at New London as a member of a Hartford artillery battery, a sort of *corps d'élite,* under the command of Captain Nathan Johnson, a well known lawyer who afterward became general of militia. Though he was for a few brief moments under the bombardment of the British ships that were blockading Decatur, Biddle and Jones in the Thames, his service was bloodless and he narrates it with humor and gusto.

He began his career as a publisher in partnership with Sheldon whose early death terminated that enterprise. Goodrich himself, however, here published by subscription the poems of John Trumbull, whom he knew well, eight volumes of the Waverly novels, then arousing

intense interest, and several school books and "toy books," as he calls them, for children. He was a leading member of a literary club which included Bishop J. M. Wainwright, Isaac Toucey, William M. Stone, Jonathan Law and S. H. Huntington.

Another literary "cotery," of which Mrs. Sigourney was the presiding genius, met generally at Daniel Wadsworth's home. Some of the poems and papers read at the first of these clubs were published by Goodrich in a short-lived periodical called "The Round Table."

We find gossipy sketches of Jeremiah Wadsworth, Dr. Cogswell and his deaf and dumb daughter Alice, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Theodore Dwight, the poets Brainard and Percival, Dr. Strong, pastor of the "Middle Brick" (the Center) Church, Colonel John Trumbull, the artist and his beautiful wife, who was supposed to be the daughter of an English earl but about whose lineage there was an impenetrable mystery. Many others of the old Hartford characters live again in these pages which furnish us what is doubtless a very accurate, as well as a very charming impression of the social life of the old town one hundred years ago.

But the great world called the future "Peter Parley" and his ambitions and love of variety drew him away from the place of his earliest literary experience to foreign residence and travel and to the little brown house that he afterward built at Jamaica Plain. Later in life he returned again to Europe and for two years was American Consul at Paris.

He had his failures as well as his successes, his days of financial losses, as well as of affluence. He experienced, too, his periods of feeble health. But he possessed the courage that ancestry like his often seems to breed and one cannot fail to accord a hearty tribute to the resolution with which, in an impaired physical condition, he set himself, like Mr. Clemens, to overcome adversity with hard work, with his pen.

His Parley books were the outgrowth of two impulses or characteristics—his innate love of children and his personal rebellion on the one hand against the dull school books of his boyhood and on the other against what he considered such ridiculous and deleterious old fairy stories as "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Jack the Giant Killer." He did not think the climax of "Little Red Riding Hood" was healthy reading

for children and he did not at all approve of Jack the Giant Killer's morals. In his opinion there was no particular sense in the Mother Goose jingles.

And so he tried to give children, in the guise of perfectly proper but at the same time interesting stories and verses, the information and a good deal of the education they required. He may have carried his theory to some extremes, but he was one of the first among us to realize that with children effective educational methods must take into consideration the securing at the outset of interest and attention.

What extraordinary success he achieved has already been intimated. Yet it is pathetic to note that he himself was the first to acknowledge the fact that his fame would be temporary. "I have written too much," he says at the height of his reputation, "and have done nothing really well. You need not whisper it to the public, at least until I am gone; but I know, better than anyone can tell me, that there is nothing in this long catalogue [of his books] that will give me a permanent place in literature."

Yet it is safe to say that as long as the human mind loves to dip into the past and to re-create

in familiar surroundings the scenes and people of long ago his "Recollections of a Life Time" will have its readers. And many of us would cheerfully relinquish any hope of immortal memory could we be assured of the love of the countless children to whom "Peter Parley" was a dear friend and companion.

VII: A Preacher of the Gospel

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IT is not often claimed that the small city or country town produces proportionately more of the human phenomena popularly denominated "characters" than does the larger municipality. Whether this is indeed a fact, or whether the truth is that in the small group variations from type are more conspicuous, is perhaps immaterial. At all events the memories and traditions of pronounced personalities seem to be frequently associated with the less populous communities, especially in New England.

In any review of the personages that lived in the capital of Connecticut in the last century the individuality of one of the life-long pastors of its oldest church stands forth as a shining example of the capricious and at the same time engaging forms in which humanity may be clothed. Above all else the Rev. Doctor Joel Hawes was a "character."

To begin with, his personal appearance was sufficiently extraordinary. Tall, gaunt, awkward, with large hands and feet, he would have attracted attention—and did attract attention—anywhere. His face was homely and in repose unprepossessing, but when he became interested in talk his expression gathered from the play of thought an animation which caused his listeners to forget the essential unattractiveness of his features.

In many respects there was something Lincoln-like about him, though he lacked the fine eyes, the wistful, haunting look, that distinguish the later portraits of his great contemporary. Like Lincoln, too, he came from the common stock and was trained in a rough school. The story of his tacking loose leaves from the Bible on the walls of the store, where in his youth he worked, and memorizing verses between visits of customers recalls somewhat similar methods of self-education employed by the boy who became president. With no money, with no friends except of his own making, with no "advantages" or "background," with not even a fair start, he early developed a tremendous courage and determination; when to this was added a sense

that the hand of God was upon him nothing could stop him. That in his day he should become one of the foremost divines in the country was inevitable.

It was his earnestness and force that made him what he was and not, it must be confessed, any outstanding brilliancy of mind. His fellow-citizen, Doctor Bushnell, far excelled him in mental power, in breadth and orginality of thought, in versatility and imagination. In Horace Bushnell was always something of the poet, much of the mystic. His books are bought today and his name remembered, while Dr. Hawes, except in his old church and city, is forgotten. Yet it is to be doubted whether, considering Joel Hawes's early difficulties and his moderate mental equipment, one could find a better example than his life furnished of what may be accomplished by a man who cherishes a conviction of personal destiny. He became assured that God intended him to preach the gospel and he proceeded to do just exactly that with confidence, single-mindedness and consequent success during a long life. His last sermon was delivered three days before his death.

Here is his theory of the preacher's mission: "Truth, God's truth especially, is *eternally*, and

must be, interesting to the mind of man; and, if I can succeed in getting that truth before the minds of my people, I shall not fail to interest and instruct all classes of them, be their cultivation and tastes and habits ever so dissimilar. This, then, shall be the great, leading object of my preaching: I will get as much of God's truth into my sermons as I can" . . . .

Might not this principle be adopted to advantage by many a modern clergyman?

It was in a rough-shod manner, regardless of obstacles, that Doctor Hawes plowed his way through life. He did not know how to compromise. Tact, adaptability, adjustment, finesse, —these words were not included in his vocabulary. He paid little attention to the amenities of existence, but went directly to his object, as on the occasion when in prayer meeting, after lamenting the fact that ordinarily only a few persons took active part in these gatherings, he suddenly called upon one diffident attendant, whose voice had never been heard, with the peremptory request, "Brother Jones, will you lead us in prayer—and we won't take any excuse."

He spoke the plain truth as he saw it, regardless of whether it was appropriate, or sometimes

whether it hurt. A distinguished lawyer, no longer living, once told the writer that when he was a small boy the doctor met him one day in the street, stopped him, put his hand on his head, and, after gazing intently at him for so long that the child became rather frightened, at last ejaculated, "'Charles, you remind me so much of your grandfather—*he* was a hard-featur'd man!"

This absolute sincerity, this disdain of any pretense or artificiality, this almost childlike naïveté, while they furnished many amusing and sometimes embarrassing incidents, had no small part in endearing the good man in the hearts of his people. Indeed the significant thing about the numerous anecdotes of him that are still occasionally quoted is that while so many of them turn on his peculiarities and eccentricities, none of them seems to detract from the affection and esteem in which the man and his memory are held in the traditions of his church. Doubtless the reason is that these stories essentially serve to delineate and illumine the portrait of an intensely earnest, able and vigorous servant of God and his fellow men.

His humor was not all unconscious. He had his own notions of the incongruous and diverting.

On one of his journeys abroad he wrote of the tombs in Westminster Abby—"There lie in promiscuous assemblage kings, queens, statesmen, warriors, poets, scholars, prostitutes, and villains, each, by his epitaph, now in heaven, but all awaiting the decisions of the last day, which, in a great majority of cases, will, it cannot be doubted, reverse forever the judgment of man."

There was, too, another side to him. Hidden in the uncouth body was a kindly and sympathetic heart. Children, at first awed and possibly repelled by his appearance and manners, soon grew to love him. His biographer quotes him as saying that he could never go past a hand-organ in the street without stopping to listen with the children and see the monkey.

Sorrow and suffering found in him an instant response and the instinctive impulse to comfort and help. Generally these traits, while partly inherent, are emphasized and made of value to others, as well as to one's self, by experience. Doctor Hawes's life had its tragic sorrows and these were translated into a singular ability to comfort and help. Then, too, while he would never compromise for an instant with temptation, weakness and sin, he could understand.

As in the case of most forceful, passionate natures, his early days, before he discovered the Bible, had their period of wildness, brief though it was. In the practical conduct of life he was no theorist, no amateur. He had struggled against poverty and loneliness, as he had fought and conquered the devil in his own life, and he recognized his old adversary and knew how to deal with him when he saw the fight going on in the experience of others.

Perhaps it was all this as much as anything that constituted the foundation for his interest in the youth of his church and city. In 1827 this interest resulted in a series of "Lectures to Young Men" delivered on successive Sunday evenings to crowded and enthusiastic assemblies in his own church, and later repeated at Yale College where subsequently he became a member of the corporation. The following year the lectures were published "at the united request" of his hearers and instantly became famous. "Few books," says Doctor Walker in his history of the First Church, "attained a like circulation." Nearly a hundred thousand copies, in various editions, were issued in this country and more in Great Britain. One Scotch publisher alone, as-

serts Doctor Walker, printed fifty thousand copies.

Reading these lectures today, nearly a century after their composition, one is impressed by the fact that here is a compendium, as valuable now as at the time of delivery, of practical rules for a good and useful life. The titles of the five original addresses indicate the subject matter—"Claims of Society on Young Men;" "Dangers of Young Men;" "Importance of Established Principles;" "Formation and Importance of Character;" "Religion the Chief Concern."

The lectures deal with plain, fundamental truths, in a straightforward business-like way. There is as little ornament as imagination about them; they have more vigor than originality, but they are bristling with common sense and set forth with tremendous earnestness the principles of a practical Christian philosopher. Epigrammatic touches, indeed, are not wanting. "A lover of good books," says the lecturer, "can never be in want of good society;" and again, "He who cares not for others will soon find that others will not care for him." "The Gospel may be neglected," he asserts, "but it cannot be understandingly disbelieved." "Character is power;

character is influence," he says, "and he who has character, though he may have nothing else, has the means of being eminently useful, not only to his immediate friends, but to society, to the church of God, and to the world."

Today the mind of youth is questioning. It is seeking not only rules for the conduct of life but a rational interpretation of religious creed and aspiration that will prove a guide in explorations on ground that perhaps Doctor Hawes would have considered forbidden. He was not a metaphysician. To him the way was plain. The fundamental truths, the orthodox acceptances, were good enough for him. The questions that for long troubled Doctor Bushnell not only did not worry Doctor Hawes—he did not understand why one should ask them. Doctor Bushnell was ahead of his time. He began where Doctor Hawes left off, and soon about the younger man gathered a school of disciples who shared in sympathy, if not with equality of intellectual penetration, the tenets of the religious philosopher, the visions of the seer and poet.

It was inevitable that two such divergent personalities as Hawes and Bushnell, laborers in the same field, living in the same city, should

come into conflict. The story of that famous difference, of the struggles to find common ground and of the final reconciliation, have today a note of pathos. For the lay reader it is not easy at first glance to see what it is all about, and yet what feeling and bitterness were aroused!

There is no space here to go into the details of that old dispute. The letters the two ministers exchanged, like all sincere letters, are typical of their respective characters and a memorialist of Doctor Hawes finds nothing for which to apologize in his side of the correspondence. His letters, indeed, evidence what a modern theologian might consider his speculative limitations, but they show, too, beneath his determination to adhere to his principles, a genuine grief at the separation and a hope that the two churches might be "rooted and grounded in the truth, and their pastors as happily united in fellowship and love."

The church of which Doctor Hawes was minister was, and still is, something more than an ecclesiastical organization. It is a civic institution. It founded the town. Its minister takes rank as a public personage. In this character Dr. Hawes was interested in many local activities.

An example of this was his connection with the famous Hartford Female Seminary—and this may serve also as another illustration of his interest in young people. On the Seminary's organization he was chosen a trustee—an office he held till his death. For many years he was its president. At the reunion of its graduates in 1892, a speaker who had been one of his "boys," and who was the executor of his will, gave a little address on his old pastor which is one of the best portraits of him that remains.

". . . the Hartford Female Seminary," said this speaker, "was his especial delight. To its principals he was a devoted friend; its teachers were his protégés and assistants; the pupils his spiritual garden. It was to him the nursery of all that was best in womanhood. I do not know how his sober judgment would have ranked, in relative importance, Yale College, the A. B. C. F. M., and the Seminary; but I know that in his affection this school had the warmest place. How regularly on Monday morning he opened its sessions with fervent prayer; how benignantly his benediction fell on the school as he took his departure, you all know who were in attendance in his time. And although you may have smiled

at his peculiarities, I do not believe a doubt ever crossed one of your minds that Joel Hawes was a loving, faithful friend, and truly a man of God."

VIII: A Friend of Lincoln

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IN the Spring of 1869 Gideon Welles, who had been appointed Secretary of the Navy by Lincoln and had served to the end of the Johnson administration, returned to Hartford where he lived till his death in 1878. His diary for May 2, 1869, contains the following entry:

"We left New York at 3 P. M. and reached Hartford at seven, stopping at the Allyn House. Nearly four years have passed since I have been here, more than eight since I left and took up my residence in Washington . . . Hartford itself has greatly altered—I might say improved—for it has been beautified and adorned by many magnificent buildings, and the population has increased. These I see and appreciate; but I feel more sensibly than these, other changes which come home to my heart. A new and different people seem to move in the streets. Few, comparatively, are known to me. A new generation which knows not Joseph is here."

Perhaps it was natural that the retiring secretary of the navy, returning quietly and unan-

nounced, and with possibly a trace of the depression that comes with the relinquishment of great affairs, should fancy a certain lack of enthusisam in his welcome. But a little later, when he had bought the house, now No. 11 Charter Oak Place, which was to be his future home, and his presence was more widely known, he found his friends more appreciative.

"During the week," he writes some days later, "old friends have called and welcomed me back . . . . My old friend, Calvin Day, was absent from the city when I arrived and did not get home till midnight on Saturday. As soon as he knew I was here, on Monday morning, he called. H. A. Perkins, Mrs. Colt, Beach, Seymour, etc., etc., called. Mark Howard is absent. Governor Hawley saw me at breakfast on Wednesday last and immediately came and greeted me."

It is not without interest to note that the servant question was at the time a great problem. This, and the confusion of getting settled, of unpacking loads of furniture, of arranging the contents of two hundred and twenty-four boxes that arrived from Washington, while Mrs. Welles was confined to her room as the result of a fall, "have made me," he writes, "unused as I am to these matters, exceedingly uncomfort-

able." Nevertheless, there is some mitigation, as this entry shows:

"Met Mr. Hamersley—who invited me to his store, where we had an hour, on political subjects chiefly. It is somewhere about fifteen years since we have had such and so long a conversation. So far as I have met and seen old friends, I have had every reason to be satisfied. Though not very demonstrative or forward in calling, they have without exception been cordial and apparently sincere."

During the nine remaining years of his life Mr. Welles lived quietly, devoting most of his time to writing, his chief pieces of work being an elaborate article claiming for the navy, which he felt had never received its proper share of the credit, the most important part in the capture of New Orleans, and a little volume entitled "Lincoln and Seward."

The career which he looked back upon in these last years was one which should have brought to any man the satisfactions that come from important work well done. There were, of course, elements that would naturally interfere with such satisfactions—and these a man like Gideon Welles took to heart more seriously than another might have done. No one could have served as he did in high administration during those eight

eventful years without a sense of the blundering, the waste, the cross-purposes, the petty motives, and even the treachery that were exhibited in such a disheartening fashion to those behind the scenes. But through all this he pursued steadfastly his honest and able way, not exempt from bitter criticism, like all his colleagues, nor from spiteful intrigue. He seems such a unique and stalwart figure that one is led to inquire, as one reads his history and his personal record, why he was not more famous in his day and time.

Perhaps one reason is that while he had a remarkable gift of common sense, he lacked a sense of humor and the sense of proportion that accompanies it. His diary, it is quite true, is at times what one would call humorous reading, but the humor is either unconscious or partakes of sarcasm. He took life pretty seriously—and indeed he had occasion to do so.

Then one infers another characteristic which is so difficult to define and in its way so subtle that one hesitates to be dogmatic about it. Yet reading between the lines of the diary, which is one of the frankest human documents in the world, one reader at least gains the impression

that the author, perhaps realizing the innate tendency, which the diary shows, to pronounce judgment, felt before the world the necessity of putting a curb upon this propensity. In public he never seems to have asserted himself in the Rooseveltian manner. He had decided opinions of his own and was altogether an independent, fearless person, but he appears to have been one of the rather reticent members of the cabinet. A friend tells him on one occasion that he should have been more forward in expressing his views and the diary has many references to times when he judged silence the better course —as very likely it was—for with him silence never went so far as to constitute consent to anything he disapproved. Far more single-minded and straightforward than some of the other cabinet ministers, he apparently lacked the art, which many men of smaller caliber possessed, of getting his personality in a large way before the country.

One feels that here was a capable and high-minded public servant, with many qualities which in another personality would have produced a great leader of men. But there was always this reticence. Was it possibly the inheritance of a New England ancestry?

However, if in his life-time Gideon Welles lacked the gift for individual prominence that with some of his contemporaries seemed to be the main object of life, the publication of his remarkable "Diary" has, long after his death, immortalized him. In this journal we have both a revelation of personal character that is illuminating and a historic document that is invaluable.

It is fortunate for us that when Gideon Welles sat down to his diary all restraint and repression disappeared. His clarity of vision, his firmness in his belief of what was just and right, his devotion to duty, his singular ability to estimate men and to portray character—all this gives even a casual reader a very clear conception of what manner of man he himself was. As for others, the figures that live forever in these pages are real people, wrestling in their various characteristic ways with portentous problems, the solutions of which we now look back upon as historic matters long since worked out, but which in many instances presented very different aspects at the time from those which now are obvious to us. It is remarkable how the judgment of posterity as to individuals has confirmed Welles's contemporary estimate.

To cite these portraits in detail would be to give a catalogue of the prominent characters of the day. At once the greatest and, to the modern reader the most interesting, is that of Abraham Lincoln. His personality does not appear complete and finished in any one description, but is a composite of comment, conversation and action recounted from time to time in the pages covering the period that elapsed before his death. Thus we see the gradual growing appreciation of his character from that early day when Welles noted that "much had been said and was then uttered by partisans of the incompetency of Mr. Lincoln and his unfitness," to that later cloudy morning when, by the bed on which the murdered President had to be laid diagonally because of his great height, Welles "witnessed the wasting life of the good and great man who was expiring before me." Any reader of the diary who is also familiar with the latest study of the war President—that by Lord Charnwood—and who has read or seen Drinkwater's "Lincoln," is instantly aware of the value of this journal to the historian and the dramatist.

Perhaps the ability to depict personality is the most conspicuous trait of Gideon Welles as a

writer. In this respect he adds to his ability to gauge character the expressive qualities of the literary artist. While his estimates of men are startlingly frank and definite, he is always fair, even toward those whom he disliked. Even in those biting, incisive phrases relating to his *bête noir,* Senator John P. Hale, there is something of the inevitable, impersonal condemnation of a court.

The suggestions of a certain reserve in public must not be interpreted as implying any hesitation to express the diarist's convictions when he considered that the occasion called for them. Far otherwise. Read, for example, the careful recitals of those deliberate, overwhelming, sledge-hammer conversational blows the secretary inflicted on the head of Senator Hale when the opportunity at last came of loosing long pent-up emotions. The senator must have emerged from that interview a stunned, if wiser, man.

And very early in their mutual official connection the Secretary of State discovered that Mr. Welles, and only Mr. Welles, was going to run the Navy Department. When Seward attempted to interfere surreptitiously with the naval expedition to relieve Sumter he found himself in

a great deal of trouble, the net result of which may be summarized in the following quotation from the diary:

"On our way thither [to see the President] Mr. Seward remarked that, old as he was, he had learned a lesson from this affair, and that was, he had better attend to his own business and confine his labors to his own department. To this I cordially assented."

The return of the Secretary to Hartford brought many memories of old times—days, when as editor of the "Hartford Times" he had worked for Jackson's election, later days when, slavery being injected as a moral issue into politics, he had abandoned the democratic creed and adopted the republican. Then there were the years when he had served as postmaster, as member of the general assembly, as state comptroller—and, again, that searching period when for the sake of his convictions he was willing to face sure defeat as republican candidate for governor. For eight years he had served as a member of the republican national committee and he was chairman of his state delegation to the convention that nominated for the presidency the man who was to be afterward his chief and his staunch friend—Abraham Lincoln. We

have Lincoln's own word for it, as reported verbatim in the diary, that there was no wire-pulling in connection with Gideon Welles's appointment. The fact that he was a New England man may have had something to do with it, but the real consideration was his record.

It was a life full of service for his country and of devotion to the faith that was in him, that the old man looked back upon in the closing years.

IX: Our Battle Laureate

IX: Our Battle Laureate

ABOUT six months before Gideon Welles returned to his old home, an ensign in that navy of which Mr. Welles was, under the President, commander-in-chief, landed in the port of New York on the U. S. steam frigate "Franklin". The "Franklin" bore the flag of Admiral Farragut, who was returning from a two-year command of our European Squadron, and the ensign, Henry Howard Brownell, of East Hartford, was a member of the great sailor's personal staff on which he had served during the war.

It was the end of Brownell's service and travels. Four years later, on October 31, 1872, at the height of the Grant-Greeley campaign, he died at the family homestead after a long and distressing illness. He had been born in 1820. Seven years before his death Dr. Holmes, in a review in the "Atlantic" of one of his slim volumes of verse, had called him "Our Battle Laureate."

Uneven as his verse was, he was a true poet. A spark of the divine fire had fallen upon him. Other activities had been attempted, but for him there clearly was in them no satisfaction. As a youth he tried mercantile life in New York, but abandoned it after less than a year. Teaching seems to have been the practical—if poetry is not "practical"—pursuit which proved most congenial and it is singular that his first work as a teacher was in Mobile near which the great experience of his life later occurred. This short sojourn in the South came after his graduation in 1841 from Trinity College and was followed by study of the law in Hartford where he was admitted to the bar and for a short time practiced in partnership with his brother Charles.

But the law was not for him. The poetic muse was always whispering in his ear. He saw visions and dreamed dreams—witness his "Song of the Archangels." Yet he was rather a direct and rugged sort of poet. Subtlety and indirection, fine shadings, carefully wrought lines, had little place in his methods. He appears to have been impatient of revision. He felt deeply and the need of expression was instant. Often he wrote, as he states in the preface to "Lyrics of a Day,"

currente calamo, and most of his verses were seen first in the pages of the Hartford newspapers. In the light of modern technique many of them seem already a little old-fashioned. Perhaps the present-day undergraduate would call some of them "simple." Yet any of our young intellectuals might be proud of having written "In Articulo Mortis"; surely there is nothing very simple about "The Sphinx." And one is occasionally startled by lines that have the perfect, the inevitable phrase—as in these from "The Tomb of Columbus"—

> " . . . . the fragrant breath
> Of unknown tropic flowers came o'er my path,
> Wafted—how pleasantly! for I had been
> Long on the seas, and their soft, waveless glare
> Had made green fields a longing."

It would be difficult to improve on that last line. Again—to most readers there will come a swift and dramatic vision from the two stanzas of "Qu'il Mourut"—

> "Not a sob, not a tear be spent
> For those who fell at his side—
> But a moan and a long lament
> For him—who might have died!

"Who might have lain, as Harold lay,
A King, and in state enow—
Or slept with his peers, like Roland
In the Straits of Roncesvaux."

In all his early verse there is much that is haunting and memorable, together with much that is trivial and even flippant. It was the coming of the Civil War that made Henry Brownell known as a poet. Indeed he published little before that time.

In our own day we have had great moral issues in war and we have known what the response to them could be. These issues were, however, involved with many other peoples, their application was, in a way, diffused; to different races they presented different aspects. But the Civil War was our *own* war, its issues were concentrated; it not only involved national honor, it concerned, and vitally concerned, the question whether the nation should live.

To these portentous messages and alarms, borne on every breath of the wandering breezes of those tense days, the spirit of Henry Brownell responded with an intuitive instinct, a poetic eloquence, akin to that of the seers and the prophets.

"World, art thou 'ware of a storm?
Hark to the ominous sound,
How the far-off gales their battle form,
And the great sea swells feel ground!"

In 1860, the Hartford papers were full of his "fiery lyrics" and the writer—was it Hawley or Warner?—of an appreciation of Brownell in the "Courant" shortly after his death tells how well he remembered the day in the anxious winter of 1860-61 when Brownell brought into the office of the old "Evening Press" the manuscript of "Annus Memorabilis"—verses breathing a resolution and exaltation of courage that brought a generous measure of fame. There is something about "Annus Memorabilis"—not only the meter which is the same—that suggests Macaulay's "Naseby," something, too, remotely suggestive of Kipling. Into this mood of exaltation there ran occasionally a vein of humor that only deserves mention in the case of the verses "Let Us Alone," inspired by Jefferson Davis's statement in his inaugural address, "All we want is to be left alone." Though of little poetic merit these lines caught the popular fancy and were long remembered and quoted.

And so the war came on, and the poet's vision, which had been laughed at by some readers, was justified by events. There came defeats, almost countless deaths, occasional victories, doubts of final victory—all the ebb and flow and waste of war—and to it all the sensitive but vigorous spirit responded in many chords. Of the gentler lays, the most winning to the writer are the verses called "The Battle Summers." Here are a few of the stanzas—

"All vain—Fair Oaks and Seven Pines!
A deeper hue than dying Fall
May lend, is yours!—yet over all
The mild Virginian autumn smiles.

. . . . .

"We pass—we sink like summer's snow—
Yet on the mighty Cause shall move,
Though every field a Cannae prove,
And every pass a Roncesvaux.

"Through every summer burn anew
A battle summer,—though each day
We name a new Aceldema,
Or some dry Golgotha re-dew."

On the whole, however, it was the magnificence, the drama, of the struggle that possessed him—sometimes the realization of the tremen-

dous stakes for which the game was played, sometimes the actual, objective romance of events, as in the beginning of the famous "River Fight"—

> "Would you hear of the River Fight?
> It was two of a soft spring night—
> God's stars looked down on all,
> And all was clear and bright.
> But the low fog's chilling breath—
> Up the River of Death
> Sailed the Great Admiral."

His own participation in the fighting came about in a strange way. He paraphrased in verse, first published in the "Evening Press," the rather dramatic general orders preparatory to the "River Fight." Poetically it was not a great performance, but in some way it came to the attention of Farragut who was greatly impressed. The acquaintance thus begun resulted in the unusual appointment of Brownell as master's mate on Farragut's staff and, shortly thereafter, as ensign, with the duties of secretary.

One can fancy the lift and glory in the heart of this rather retiring poet and teacher, with a hitherto unsatisfied thirst for action and drama, as he stood on the quarter-deck of the "Hart-

ford" fighting her way up Mobile Bay on that early August morning in 1864. At last he was in the midst of great events. This was his crowded hour—and the gods gave him full measure. Even in plain prose it is a gallant story. What a life-time must have been lived in those moments when Craven's monitor "Tecumseh", off to port, making for the Confederate ram "Tennessee", struck a torpedo and went down; when the "Brooklyn", leading the column, just ahead of the "Hartford", backed down upon the flag-ship, in fear of more torpedoes; when Farragut, lashed in the rigging, saw his line doubling up in confusion close under the Confederate batteries! It was then occured the famous colloquy and order. "What is the trouble?" was asked of the "Brooklyn" by the flag-ship and the answer—"Torpedoes." "Damn the torpedoes!" shouted the Admiral. "Captain Drayton, go ahead! Jouett, full speed!" And the "Hartford," increasing speed rapidly, passed under the stern of the "Brooklyn" and took the lead, firing her starboard batteries as fast as the men could work. One did not need to be a poet to secure a thrill from such a situation, but what must it have meant to the creative imagination

that till then had pictured such scenes only in fancy!

And this was only the early part of the fight. Through it all Brownell took notes, as he had been ordered, of the progress of the action and literally wrote at least one stanza of "The Bay Fight." During the battle he dropped one of his papers which was later found and returned to him with an expression of admiration that he could write so legibly in the midst of such excitement. "If I were killed," he replied, "I didn't want any of you to think I'd been afraid."

Probably "The Bay Fight" was Brownell's most famous poem, though "The River Fight" is generally classed with it. The ballad has its faults. It is too long and too detailed for modern taste. It is ragged in places—the poet made his own versification much of the time. But it has vigor, vividness and sincere emotion, and through it all runs the turmoil and thunder of the battle. "The Bay Fight" has been compared to the work of Campbell, Drayton and Tennyson—yet no one has suggested a special likeness in temper and methods, in its narrative portions, to "The Ballad of the Revenge" of which it reminded one reader. At the close, where the meter

changes to a quieter rhythm, there are a tenderness and aspiration and felicity of phrasing that arrest even the casual reader—

"To-day the Dahlgren and the drum
Are dread Apostles of his name;
His Kingdom here can only come
By chrism of blood and flame.

"Be strong; already slants the gold
Athwart these wild and stormy skies;
From out this blackened waste, behold,
What happy homes shall rise!

. . . . . .

"And never fear a victor foe—
Thy children's hearts are strong and high,
Nor mourn too fondly—well they know
On deck or field to die."

The verse of the Great War and that of the Civil War show one marked contrast. The best poetry of the recent titanic struggle is individualistic. It reflects the re-actions of personality to the stress and tension, the long-drawn, desperate drudgery, the tragedy, and sometimes the humor, of the strange experience. It pictures the dreams of home and peace. Most of the best of it has been written by young soldiers, many of whom were novices in the poetic rôle. On the whole

the well-known poets did not come up to expectations. There were of course exceptions, but most of this recent verse, appealing and beautiful as it is, misses the higher vision, perhaps because the immediate scene and the personal experience were so overwhelming. The poets of our Civil War, however, were obsessed with the meaning of it all, with the hopes and fears for the country's future. Have we as yet anything in American verse about the Great War that we can place beside the best war poetry of Holmes and Whittier? Can we find sustained poetic inspiration that compares with Lowell's "Commemoration Ode"? Whereas to this recent conflict is the lyric power of the "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"? And, coming down to mere narrative and descriptive verse, what incident of this modern Armageddon has found among us its immortal ballad, as the battle of Mobile Bay found its eloquent poetic record in "The Bay Fight"?

X: The Temple of the Muses

X: The Temple of the Muses

TO older citizens the Wadsworth Atheneum has an especial and peculiar charm. Doubtless more recent residents also feel this attraction, but it is natural that to those who as children lived in its shadow, as it were, the appeal should be strongest.

Here we were wont to go on rainy afternoons to look at the illustrated papers in the reading room. In the historical society's quarters upstairs it used to give one a peculiar thrill to sit on the link of the chain which during the Revolution was stretched across the Hudson at West Point, and which we had read about in the "Boys of 'Seventy-Six." There was, too, a certain ghastly emotional experience to be derived from an inspection of the sword holes, just over the heart, in the waistcoat and shirt of Colonel Ledyard. Then there were those Saturday mornings spent with the good friend of all

children in the weekly proceedings at the Atheneum of the old "Agassiz Association."

In those days we were reading "Kenilworth" and "Woodstock" and the castellated structure acquired in our minds a quality of mystery and romance. Certain precincts of the building were denied us and an impression gained credence that somewhere in the edifice, the plan of which we never fathomed, were secret rooms, passages and staircases. Certainly if ghosts walked anywhere the place where you would be most likely to find them was on some Hallowe'en midnight among these relics of the past. But we never got in at midnight—in fact nothing could have persuaded us to attempt such an entry.

More mature experience removed something of the mystery, but the charm never entirely vanished. It came, however, to be exercised in different ways. Perhaps it was necessary during vacations to supplement college reading by the use of the historical society's library, then installed in the delightful quarters that had been the first home of the Watkinson collection. In many ways it seems a pity that this old library, with its oak bookshelves, arranged in alcoves, its galleries and delightful little staircases, has been

abandoned for modern, but less atmospheric quarters. It was a charming room and the only place of its kind in the state, except the old library at Yale, the proposed alteration of which recently created such a storm of opposition.

It was discovered, however, that the newer and larger Watkinson Library also offered a quiet refuge when one wanted to study or read without interruption. Here, too, were and still are alcoves, galleries and staircases, but loftier, more imposing and triumphant than in the intimate and friendly and older library. The main room of the Watkinson is, however, an alluring spot where one may escape from the financial implications of the immediate environment into a world with which money and business have little to do.

Increasing years brought an interest in the old portraits. Our childhood acquaintance with the pictorial features of the Atheneum was chiefly confined to Trumbull's paintings of the Revolutionary battles. These seemed to us at the time perfect representations of what really happened at Bunker Hill, Princeton and Quebec. But the inevitable development of a more catholic artistic sense led us to dwell with a grow-

ing interest on the work of some of the great masters displayed in the art gallery. With these the portraits of state and local worthies in the historical society's rooms could not compete very successfully from the standpoint of workmanship, but these local portraits acquired a new importance as the story of the state and the old town took its place in our enlarging appreciation of relative values. At least we could gather from them some idea of what the people looked like who had walked the streets where we had played as children and who had taken their parts in the building of the city, the state and the nation.

We heard the story of Elizabeth Whitman and the portraits of her father and mother became something more than merely faded old pictures. Oliver Ellsworth was no longer only a name—there he was, sitting at a table with his wife, his familiar house visible in the distance. And when curiosity grew as to Daniel Wadsworth, the founder of the Atheneum, we were able to satisfy this in some degree by hunting up the two portraits of him—one as a boy, leaning on his father's shoulder, the other Ingham's painting of him in middle life.

THE WATKINSON LIBRARY

ii

It is strange that so little has been written about Daniel Wadsworth. He was the original Maecenas of Hartford. But he had no Horace to celebrate him and he would have abhorred the publicity which the Roman patron of the arts and letters seems rather to have enjoyed. His modesty is well illustrated by the fact that he requested that Dr. Hawes should at his funeral services attempt no formal eulogy, in the fashion of the day. He died at ten minutes past one on the morning of July 28, 1848, a few days before his seventy-seventh birthday. Though he lived to this advanced age his health was always frail and this fact may account, in part, for his rather retiring disposition.

He was, however, by no means a recluse. His home, altered, but still standing at the southwest corner of Prospect Street and Atheneum Street—formerly "Wadsworth's Alley,"—now laboring under the alliterative title of "Atheneum Annex," was the center of a simple and delightful social life. In its notice of Mr. Wadsworth after his death the "Courant" said of this home that it "has remained for half a century a scene of cheerful hospitality, where persons

of humble worth as well as those of distinction, have been received with kindness and courtesy, and cheered by the unclouded sunshine of Mrs. Wadsworth's benevolence and lovely manners."

Mrs. Wadsworth was the daughter of the second Governor Trumbull. "'Her mind,'" says Dr. Hawes, in the funeral sermon which in his wife's case Mr. Wadsworth did not prohibit, "'was sprightly, inquisitive, well-balanced and excellently cultivated; her temper was uncommonly mild, affectionate and cheerful, often exhibiting a pleasant playfulness of spirit, enlivening conversation and intercourse, but never light, censorious or severe; her heart replete with tenderness, and alive to every social and sympathetic feeling." She died two years before her husband. Their married life extended over fifty-three years.

After her death a Miss Sarah McClellan, who seems to have been a connection of Mrs. Wadsworth, appeared in the character of secretary for Mr. Wadsworth, who was very feeble during the last two years of his life. She kept a diary, now in the possession of the Connecticut Historical Society, through which we get contemporary glimpses of the kindly life of the old street, though most of the references are in the

nature of a catalogue of visits paid and received, such as,—

"Jan. 1, 1848. Received a beautiful book as a New Year's present from Mrs. Sigourney . . . Judge Ellsworth, Doctor Grant, Mr. Clair [Clerc?] and Mr. Barnard called in the morning. P. M. Judge Williams, Mr. Smith [Alfred?], Mr. Roswell and John Parsons called. Went down to see Mrs. Hudson—found her better."

On another occasion she records how Dr. Grant brought to the house four children, aged from nine to thirteen, known as the "Apollonians," who were to give a concert in the evening and who sang to Mr. Wadsworth at his home as he was not well enough to attend the concert. After they had left Miss McClellan went to Dr. Grant's "and took a galvanic shock for my painful arm."

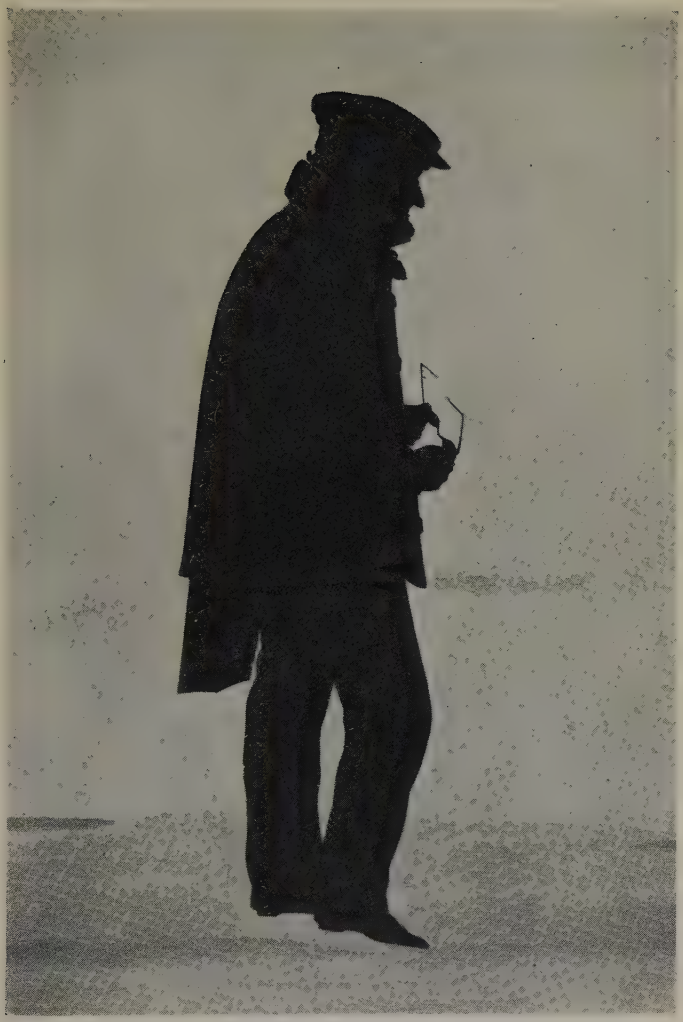
The most valuable part of the diary historically, however, relates to the last illness of Mr. Wadsworth and his death on a night of midsummer thunderstorms, and this is rather long and rather intimate for quotation.

In fact most of our knowledge of the founder of the Atheneum comes more from memories and traditions than from exact data. These legends picture him as a fragile man with a stoop, fond of wearing even in the house, an artist's cap and a

cloak, partly to protect himself from drafts, of which he had an exaggerated dread, partly, we fancy, to exemplify in his person his artistic ideals.

For art was his great interest in life and his wealth enabled him to gratify his artistic inclinations and to perpetuate in the city he loved a center for the humanities which to him seemed so far above riches. In a way he was a cosmopolitan, for he had been educated in France and England, accompanying his father, Jeremiah Wadsworth, there when he was twelve years old. Many of the paintings and prints, of which he was an inveterate collector, came from Europe —as most examples of good art then did.

He was himself an illustrator and painter. The illustrations of his friend's—Professor Benjamin Silliman's—"Tour From Hartford to Quebec," are by him and they include two views of his beautiful country seat, "Monte Video," on Talcott Mountain. It is characteristic of Professor Silliman's regard for what were doubtless his friend's wishes that Mr. Wadsworth's name is not mentioned in his description of the spot. We know of at least one home, and there are probably several, where attractive and



DANIEL WADSWORTH

BY PERMISSION OF
THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

interesting sketches and paintings by Mr. Wadsworth are still cherished.

As the years increased upon him the care of his health seems to have become something of a pre-occupation. It is related that he had a series of capes of differing colors and sizes which he superimposed one upon another, as the weather grew colder, attracting thus considerable attention in his walks abroad. In his big yellow coach he installed a stove in cold weather, and a smoke-stack, which may have caused our fellow citizens of that day to wonder whether they were beholding a steamboat on wheels—or even a motor vehicle of the period. Into his pew in the southwest corner of the Center Church he invariably had a foot stove carried when attending service in winter.

Looking back through the years the life of his time seems to have had a more friendly and neighborly element than our urgent affairs today appear to permit. Perhaps there is something of fancy in this, but it is not all fancy to believe that in the institution that bears his name Daniel Wadsworth has transmitted to succeeding generations a flavor and memory of this old life, as well as an opportunity to know the refreshment

of certain things that can not be measured in money—the things of the mind and the spirit.

iii

On the whole, the portion of the Atheneum that was the most popular with the children of an older day, and became through familiarity the least mysterious, was the reading room. In retrospect this room seems to have had a distinct quality of its own. For one thing it appears, in memory, to have been characterized by a pervading aroma of wet umbrellas, rubbers and damp clothing. Probably this is due to the fact that one generally frequented it on rainy days when out-of-door pursuits were impossible. Somebody was always opening a window to let in a little air.

At that time the room was in the northeast corner of the main building. Its chief furnishings were the many rows of oak reading desks, shaped like inverted V's, raised on standards to a convenient height. To these slanting surfaces the papers were clamped by wooden contrivances which materially interfered with a comprehensive view of all double page pictures.

Nevertheless one rather approved of these old oak reading desks. They gave a studious air to the room and separated the floor space into sections that contributed a certain effect of privacy. Also they concealed the upper portions of readers on opposite sides, or in different sections, from one another. It was rather diverting to peek underneath and endeavor to construct mentally from the shoes, trousers and skirts—they were long enough in those days—thus visible, the respectively corresponding upper sections of anatomy. After a creative effort of this kind it was interesting to move around to the other side and see how nearly right you were.

On the whole the English illustrated papers were the most popular of the periodicals and sometimes in the attempt to secure exclusive possession of these there was a good deal of squabbling which had to be terminated by the young woman in charge, who, however, was reasonably tolerant and far more popular than the dragon who guarded the historical museum upstairs.

The first real war any of us remembered was then in progress and the "Illustrated London News" and the London "Graphic" were full of

pictures of British warships bombarding Alexandria and of charging Highlanders at Tel-el-Kebir. Though soon supplanted by our own "Life," "Punch," too, was something of a favorite, with its drawings by Du Maurier of tall, wasp-waisted, beautiful ladies with remarkable coiffures and trailing skirts, and of men with Dundreary whiskers, frock coats, top hats and monocles—all engaged in what seemed to us singularly inane conversation. Most of us had "St. Nicholas" at home and of the other American publications "Harper's Young People" easily held first place, with "Harper's Weekly" a close second. The girls were often discovered poring over "Harper's Bazaar"—an inexplicable thing to the masculine mind. That seemed to us a silly paper.

In time certain habitués of the reading room became familiar to us—by sight, that is. There was, of course, the nondescript crowd of persons out of employment, or idlers, who came in to get warm or to pass an hour or two. These were the floating population, as it were, and the individuals varied with the seasons. Some of them seemed to be searching the advertising columns of the dailies for a job. Others read strange technical

papers—engineering magazines or trade journals. One has often wondered since what perennial hopes, what latent ambitions, what undiscovered geniuses, were concealed amid this rather drab clientele of the reading room.

But that some definite purposes animated certain devotees could not be doubted—though what the exact individual motives were was not always apparent. There was, for example, the queer old man—short, stocky, with gray beard and spectacles—whose specialty seemed to be the New York papers and the political and economic magazines. He was generally supposed to be a little "off" and he had Doctor Johnson's habit when walking along the street of tapping with his stick every post and tree he passed. If he abstractedly missed one he would go back and rap it. We often noticed unkind urchins of our own age following him and reminding him of any omissions, for the intense joy of seeing him invariably return and perform this rite. Let us hope that none of us attempted this, though it can not be asserted that the temptation was always resisted, even if no memory of succumbing to it remains.

Then there was another frequenter of the reading room who was generally supposed to be not quite normal mentally. He was a kindly, gentle soul, however, and it is pleasant to remember that he was never the subject of ridicule. Indeed his deprecating manner, his invariable courtesy, even to children, effectually disarmed any suggestion of the sort. We all liked him and perhaps he did not dislike us. He would come softly in, with bent head and humble air, put his umbrella in the rack, look about to ascertain what favorite papers of his had not been pre-empted, slide with the effect of an apology into some empty place, put on his spectacles, get out his note book and pencil and begin to transcribe. During each of his visits he was continually taking notes and the imagination is appalled at any effort to compute the number of note books he must have filled, for he was a constant visitor. The occupation was of course an obsession, a phase, no doubt, of various mental vagaries he harbored. Probably as children we missed something of the pathos of the fine mind thus clouded, but it is a comfort to remember that we did not altogether fail in appreciation of the spirit of the gentleman.

There comes dimly to memory the figure of a rather elderly woman who wore an old-fashioned bonnet and rather odd clothing of a bygone style. She was a busy person, flitting from paper to paper, forever in quest of some apparently elusive data. It seemed to be necessary for her to hold frequent consultations with the attendant. These were carried on, for her part, in loud, hissing whispers that were far more penetrating and distracting than ordinary conversation would have been and the good-natured presiding genius of the room spent much of her time looking up references for this curious and acquisitive visitor. What she was seeking we never knew, but, though it was manifestly of the utmost importance to her, one could not escape the impression of futility. Surely a public reference or reading room is an excellent place in which to study the caprices of the human mind.

This person's audible conferences with the attendant bring to mind the notice that was prominently posted in various parts of the room,—

LOUD TALKING OR PROLONGED
CONVERSATION WILL NOT BE
ALLOWED IN THIS ROOM

Now that the statute of limitations has barred civil, if not criminal proceedings, the writer will confess that some years later, when an undergraduate of Yale College, he abstracted, after the unoriginal fashion of his kind, one of these notices and took great pride in displaying it in a prominent place on the wall of his room at college where its apt and ironic message aroused great envy and admiration.

But to return to our memories of the reading room's habitués—there was Cousin George. This vicarious relative was an unattached Congregational minister who sojourned in the city from time to time. The nomadic character of his ministry was due partly to principle, partly to a kind of wanderlust. In this old bachelor there was a wandering streak—he was not happy for long in one place. But he had a strong social instinct and a keen interest in and affection for his friends and was greatly beloved by them. A great purveyor of news, he was an insatiable reader of the papers and toward the middle of the morning he invariably came into the reading room, as into a club, to look through the news of the day. His soft, black hat, overcoat with short shoulder cape, eyeglasses with black rib-

bon and mutton-chop whiskers gave a distinct individuality to his appearance. About his looks there was an effect of oddity—and indeed, like most of us, he had his whimseys and peculiarities. There was little externally to indicate his kindly sympathy, his talent for friendship, his thoughtfulness for others, particularly for the sick. For that reason, doubtless, it was not until maturer years that that side of his character fully dawned on one. There was nothing to denote this in the picture of him, seated in a good reading light, in one corner of the room, his cape-overcoat thrown back on his shoulders, his thin legs crossed, absorbed in last night's "New York Evening Post."

Like the others we have mentioned he will never come to the reading room again. Did they, we wonder, surmise that certain small eyes were observing them, that certain youthful personalities were conferring about them, that certain immature minds were striving to grasp what manner of men and women they were? Truly memories of us all may live long in unsuspected places.

XI: The Friend of Youth

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IT was announced the other day in the public prints that the Private Coachman's Benevolent Association had filed its certificate of dissolution. Over this laconic statement in the morning paper one reader, at least, paused and let his thoughts wander. To him there seemed a significant and, indeed, a rather melancholy interest in the announcement. The incident thus briefly mentioned not only marked the end of an ancient brotherhood; it furnished a striking commentary on changing social conditions.

As a type the private coachman is disappearing, and with him vanish the coaches, landeaus and victorias, the well-matched pairs of reliable family horses with shining harnesses and jingling chains, the snappy trotters, the buggy rides and the horse in general as a voucher of social responsibility and standing.

The possession of a motor car and the services of a chauffeur, though generally involving more financial outlay than a stable and coachman necessitated, somehow do not quite confer the reflected glory in which the employer of a coachman used to shine. Everybody has a motor and the very prevalence and numerousness of the chauffeur, capable and loyal soul though he be, necessarily detract from the distinction which the rarer coachman used to give.

One usually stood rather in awe of the coachman—particularly in boyhood, the period with which he is chiefly associated in the memories of most of us. He was a person of strange and exalted attainments. He held mysterious and telepathetic communication with his horses. He understood them, and they him. He had theories about shoeing, he could prescribe for most of their ailments, he hissed at them queerly as he groomed them. Moreover, he had the real sporting spirit. He knew all about the performances of Maud S. and John L. Sullivan. He called the firemen and policemen by their first names and the fire bell would send him running out of the stable at any hour.

If the boy wanted to acquire a puppy he got the coachman to select it and to clip its ears (without anæsthetic) behind the stable—or, if the coachman was wise, he persuaded a friend to do this surgical work at some livery stable, out of earshot of the family. Probably when the puppy was grown the coachman surreptitiously staged fights with him against rival dogs, chaperoned by brother coachmen, late at night after the boy and his elders were asleep, thus occasionally providing a precarious addition to his wages if the dog came up to expectation. To tell the truth, it was generally selected for its fighting qualities.

He had strange tales of adventure, many of them doubtless fictitious, but showing the swift imagination of the race from which he generally sprang. The great event of his life was his trip to Philadelphia at the time of the Centennial when he was temporarily a soldier and had charge of the major's horse. For years brilliant lithographs of the exhibition buildings were tacked to the stable wall above the shelf where stood bottles of horse liniment and harness dressing. He had seen men and cities and out of his experience had grown a practical and homely

wisdom that was by no means lost upon his young admirers. He was the friend of youth.

And now it seems that the guild is officially extinct. Hail and farewell, private coachman! Though legally dissolved you are not forgotten, but remain ever enshrined in our memories of an older and simpler day.

In those memories the coachman assumes multiform incarnations. The individuals varied as the years of childhood lengthened, but they all conformed to type.

At the end of one of those dim vistas of childish recollections, illumined by the mellow light that always plays about our earliest remembrances, stands the figure of Patrick, the first coachman of them all. His first appearance was so very long ago—as a life-time is measured—that the vision, emerging from the mists in which the first consciousness of the world is enveloped, is painted somewhat vaguely on the retina of the mind. How much of it is real, how much an idealized memory, can not perhaps be definitely determined. After all, it is only a picture and a feeling.

One seems to remember being enthroned on a rug spread on the grass of the garden, beneath

the big apple tree, in the level sunlight of a late afternoon in spring. It must have been spring for the apple tree was in bloom. About one, seated on the grass, was grouped a circle of the maids of the household and their visitors. No experience of later years has ever given the slightest intimation that one could possibly be or become such a center of interest and admiration as that microcosm of dawning intelligence then consciously was to that laudatory audience. There was a distinct sense of being the source of the happiness and laughter that composed the mental atmosphere of that golden afternoon. Such an assurance that the world was entirely good and beautiful has not since been attained.

Then, suddenly, Patrick was added to the circle—a smooth-shaven, apple-cheeked, merry man—having doubtless strolled over from the neighboring stable yard. Was it partly because a masculine note of admiration was added to the feminine chorus that the effect of general well-being and of mirth seemed, with his arrival, to be emphasized and confirmed? At all events there was an instinctive perception between Patrick and the center of interest that they understood each other, and Patrick was wel-

comed from the rug with evidences of the recognition of this bond which precipitated another wave of delightful worship.

It was the beginning of a firm friendship. Patrick soon shared with the nurse of those Elysian days the early confidences, the awakening and absurd aspirations, of the childish mind. In the first cloud of trouble, which after some years grew from the marriage and departure of the nurse, he was a never failing solace. He received with serious consideration a carefully thought-out plan to compel her return by engaging one of the hook and ladder companies to pull down her new home, thus presumably leaving her without any abiding place but the parental roof. Seated on the front seat of the old carriage with his young friend, taking the air about the city, he assisted in plotting the details of this scheme. It was so subtly diluted by other interests, and disappeared so gradually, that no particular disillusion resulted.

Why Patrick left and when remain a mystery. He was succeeded by a Scotchman with reddish whiskers and for long was lost to sight. Then, unexpectedly, he re-appeared.

One afternoon, years afterward, while calling at a friend's home and talking over old days, it developed that Patrick was still alive—a very old man now—that he was employed by these friends as gardener—that, as a matter of fact, he was at the moment at work in the garden. It was, indeed, possible to see him from the window. What was the meaning of that instant sense of doubt as to whether it would be well to walk over to the window? At least this hesitancy did not prevail and there, in a far corner, raking among the shrubbery, could be discerned the figure of a little, bowed old man in blue denim overalls and a weather-beaten felt hat. One could not see his face—his back was toward the window. How small he looked! Why, Patrick had been a fine figure of a young Irishman, not tall, perhaps, but of a respectable height.

The suggestion was inevitable that it would be interesting to go over and talk to him. Indeed a start was made, but again came that impulse of hesitation, stronger this time and not to be gainsaid. Was Patrick well—was he happy? On the whole the answer was in the affirmative. He had, it appeared, touches of rheumatism, but he could still do light work, and he liked to

putter about the lawns and the flower beds. At home he was comfortable. Generally speaking, it seemed that life had treated him not too harshly. It was clear that he was with kindly people—and there one left him.

After all, it is comforting to realize that the picture of Patrick that is best remembered is not of a bent old man, leaning somewhat heavily upon his rake, but of the figure that takes shape out of the mists of childhood—a figure that somehow always personifies the attributes of kindliness and sympathy—standing in a long vanished garden, beneath an apple tree in bloom.

XII: The Christmas Party

XII: The Christmas Party

WE always stood rather in awe of Raymond's Uncle Horace because it was said he had once taught Latin in a boys' school. Any one who had ever wielded the power of a teacher was a person with a background of authority and importance whom one could not approach too familiarly. Indeed, it would have been difficult to be familiar with Raymond's Uncle Horace under any conceivable circumstances, for he was essentially a dignified and aloof person.

It was understood that the abandonment of teaching had been caused by failing health and to the same origin was perhaps due the reserve and apparent preoccupation that militated against any real intimacy with his nephew's young friends. There was some vague story of a young wife who had died years before, but an experience of that sort was so far beyond our compre-

hension that the rumor added but little to the isolation in which Raymond's uncle seemed to dwell. He was never really an actor in the drama of our young lives. Sometimes appearing in the wings, more often in the critic's seat, he was an onlooker rather than a participant.

One remembers him chiefly as walking back and forth on the old street between Raymond's grandfather's house and certain indefinite rooms he dwelt in which were probably in the edifice then known as the Charter Oak building.

The impression that persists is of one very carefully wrapped up against the weather. He wore a long ulster, a seal-skin cap, with a visor, and about his neck, under his iron-gray beard, a muffler was efficiently disposed. His large, gold-rimmed spectacles gave him the customary owlish, peering expression, but in spite of them he could not seem to recognize us, or any one else, except when close at hand. He carried a stout walking stick, the point of which he never raised from the ground, but dragged after him between alternate steps and he stood so straight that he appeared to lean a little backward. It would seem that in the warmer seasons this habitual manner of dress must have been modi-

fied, but there is no recollection of any other costume.

A tradition of immense learning clung about him. It was said that in his mysterious rooms the walls were lined with books which he spent all his time in reading. It was even whispered that he read Latin and Greek for fun—and no higher intellectual achievement than this could be imagined. There was something facile and careless, too, about the idea of reading for pleasure dead languages with which we had as yet no acquaintance but which loomed as educational obstacles in the not distant future. This casual facility appealed to our youthful sporting spirit and compelled a reluctant admiration. Whatever Raymond's uncle's shortcomings as an intimate might be, he had at least reached the point where matters that were soon to be weighty problems to us were to him merely a question of amusement.

Raymond's grandparents lived in an old house around the corner from the old street. Their home was, in fact, one of the oldest houses in the city. They were people of wealth for that day and the house had been brought up to date in the fashion of that time when the finer harmonies

of the antique were not as yet appreciated. Plate glass windows had replaced the small panes, hard wood floors covered the fine oak planking and varnished inside shutters had supplanted the dignified panelling of the originals. But our aesthetic appreciations, like those of our elders, noticed no incongruity. To us the old house was the acme of contemporary good taste, as well as the abode of comfort and even luxury.

It was here that Raymond's grandparents gave their annual Christmas party for their grandson and his friends. This was a festival famous in the young life of that neighborhood. Its celebrity was chiefly due to the Gargantuan amount of delightful food available. There was a tree, of course, but the presents were of the edible, rather than the permanent kind, and no less appreciated on that account. Nowhere else was there to be found such an amount and variety of candy, fruit, ice cream, cake, nuts, raisins, chicken salad, sandwiches, jellies, jams, *pâté de foies gras*, and other pleasing forms of nourishment—to say nothing of lemonade and various kinds of "shrub"—as at Raymond's Christmas party. At the close of each of these events it did not seem that we could ever eat again, yet there

was a certain assurance of the continuance of the fête in carrying home a paper bag containing an orange, an apple and a generous selection of sweets.

After the assembly had been fed there were games—"Drop the Handkerchief," "Still Pond, No More Moving," that perennial juvenile pastime where the participants chant the memorable chorus beginning "Oats, peas, beans and barley grow," and sometimes, much against the sentiments of the boys, that embarrassing game where the player who became "It" was compelled to "Bow to the wittiest, kneel to the prettiest and kiss the one you love best." The boys decided early in their social experience that no self-respecting male ought to play this game and it soon fell into disrepute, though the girls fought for its continuance for a time.

Youthful spirits rise with food as rapidly as does a thermometer under the sun's rays and a good deal of noise and romping invariably accompanied these games. Raymond's dear old grandfather and grandmother enjoyed all these manifestations of young life as keenly, so far as we could see, as did the children themselves, but Uncle Horace, it was evident, did not like

noise and confusion. Memory pictures him standing in the background of the party, as in the background of life, a quiet spectator, blinking shortsightedly but not unkindly, through his big spectacles, and vanishing altogether as the excitement increased.

Once one of the youthful guests, while the festivities were at their height, wandered into a remote part of the house in search of some accessory required for an approaching game and entered by a rear door a room where Uncle Horace had been reading. He had put his book down in his easy chair and was now discovered standing in the other doorway, his back to the room.

An intense curiosity to look at one of Uncle Horace's learned volumes took possession of the interloper and at that age it did not occur to him that delicacy might demand some hesitation. He tiptoed over to the chair expecting to see on the cushion some calf-bound, ancient tome written in characters that were hieroglyphics to him. But a complete reversal of his ideas about Uncle Horace was at hand. The book that lay there was in blue-and-gold cloth binding and was a copy of the first edition of "Huckleberry Finn."

The intruder looked in some astonishment at the spare figure of Raymond's uncle and perceived that there was no danger of discovery for the attitude was that of a man completely absorbed. He was listening intently. At this distance the general hubbub was softened and there was a rather wistful quality in the childish voices rising and falling with the lilting old refrain:

"Thus the farmer sows his seeds,
Thus he stands and takes his ease,
Stamps his foot (bang!) and claps his hand (smack!)
And looks around to view the land."

After the lapse of a good many years it is this picture of Raymond's Uncle Horace that is the most vivid. There was some implication in the listening figure, with head slightly bowed, one hand resting on the casing of the doorway, that carried, even to a childish mind, a suggestion of hitherto unsuspected aspects of the rather lonely widower's personality. At the time it was all very vague and unformulated and later speculation has hesitated somewhat before the privacy thus unwittingly invaded. Yet afterward one could not help at least wondering what visions of his own childhood he saw as he listened to the

silly old lines of the ancient folk game, handed down through so many generations and bearing their little testimony to the continuity of experience.

A tardy sense of eavesdropping awoke at last in the youthful visitor's mind—an understanding that he did not belong there. He slipped out as quietly as he had entered, but he took with him a dawning appreciation of a new incarnation of Raymond's Uncle Horace.

XIII: The Fabric of a Dream

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"And that night . . . . a dream of that place came to Florian, a dream which did for him the office of a finer sort of memory, bringing its object to mind with a great clearness, yet, as sometimes happens in dreams, raised a little above itself, and above ordinary retrospect. The true aspect of the place . . . . the fashion of its doors, its hearths, its windows, the very scent upon the air of it, was with him in sleep for a season. . . . ."

—THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE.

COUSIN MARY'S home was a little, old, brick house standing flush with the street. A woodshed where the cat slept in summer extended easterly from the house and in the angle thus formed was a diminutive garden where such old-fashioned flowers as holly-hocks, bachelors' buttons, sweet william and larkspur seemed to bloom earlier and last longer than elsewhere.

Everything about Cousin Mary's home was on a small scale. She herself was a very small and slight old lady, but she had inherited from the

hardy New England race from which she sprang a certain tradition of vitality and longevity which she lived long enough to exemplify in her own person. Other family legends of uncomfortable eccentricity and general worrisomeness she utterly disproved, for never was there a kindlier or more placid soul than she.

Of course she wore a cap with lavender ribbons and gowns of black bombazine for every day and black silk with lace at the throat for great occasions. She seldom ventured out of doors, except into her garden, or, on such annual celebrations as Thanksgiving and Christmas, to a neighboring relative's home where she was with difficulty persuaded to take at dinner a glass of port or Madeira, though she always protested that she did not really need it. Most of her life was spent in the southeast downstairs sitting-room, where she used to sit in the smallest, oldest rocking-chair ever seen. On memorable occasions she would take possession of the kitchen, against the protests of Drusilla, her companion, and make gingerbread that was famous in the neighborhood, especially among the children.

To childish imaginations there always seemed something mysterious about the rooms in Cousin

Mary's house—doubtless merely because we never visited them,—except the sitting-room and the kitchen. The sitting-room communicated with another room—I think it was called the "parlor"—by folding doors. These were generally open, but in there the blinds were always closed and the room was in a kind of perpetual dusky twilight. We could dimly see within, but no recollection of entering remains, though there is a faint memory of an obscure marble-topped center-table—were there not wax flowers on it under a glass cover?—and ancient mahogany chairs.

We never reached the upper floors, at least till after Cousin Mary's death, when it seems as if there was an expedition to the attic in company with some older person of authority. It was a brief and somewhat nervous experience. Those were the days when all ghost stories might possibly be true and the attic, like the "parlor," was dark. The visit was long enough to leave only a memory of dim corners, piles of old horse-hide trunks, a remarkable collection of ancient cooking utensils adapted for use over the open fires of colonial and Revolutionary days—where, we wonder, has all this old kitchen equipage gone?

—and rafters from which hung dried roots and leaves of one kind and another. It was a distinct relief to get out of doors again.

But of course the mysterious qualities we attributed to certain precincts of Cousin Mary's house existed entirely in our youthful minds. No one could be imagined who had less to conceal than this serene old lady. Yet it was natural that there should be romantic stories about her.

She had never married and it was not strange that speculations about her past should concern themselves with early love affairs. These fancies crystallized into the quite customary tradition that she had been engaged in her early youth to a young man whose future was then so uncertain that her parents objected to the match. The years have dimmed recollection of the details of the story—there were other romantic complications—but at all events the young man afterwards married another and lived to disprove the early doubts of sceptical parents as to his chance of success in life. But Cousin Mary remained true to her early love.

Many years after her death one of the children who used occasionally to call upon her, and to whom even now the odor of certain old-fashioned

flowers will bring back a vivid picture of that little garden, had a curious dream about her.

He was again in that familiar sitting-room, but in some way he was invisible to the other two occupants. One was of course Cousin Mary —but quite a different Cousin Mary. Youth had come back to her. She was a young girl again— and one of the prettiest young girls the dreamer had ever seen. Her hair was dressed high at the back of her head. A great comb was in it. Curls hung down over her cheeks, as sitting in the familiar diminutive rocking-chair she bent her head forward listening to the words of her visitor. Old lace was about her throat which was of a singular whiteness and beauty. Her gown was of some shimmering stuff, high-waisted, with many flounces. Her whole figure gave the beholder a sense of delicate and rather fragile beauty. She was a creature of race—a thoroughbred.

Seated close before her and talking softly and eagerly was a good-looking young man in the uniform of a naval officer of, I should guess, the period of the second war with Great Britain. His sword and cap lay on the floor beside his chair.

Incongruities in dreams are generally accepted without surprise, but in this case the sleeper afterward recalled a sense of astonishment at the character of this stranger. Who was he? So far as was known no sailor had ever been associated with Cousin Mary's life.

Even in dreams a sense of the proprieties sometimes follows one and it was evident to the dreamer that his presence was superfluous. He turned to the dark "parlor" and for the first time entered.

It was a queer place. All sorts of curios from the East were scattered about it—yet "scattered" is not the right word for there was a method in the arrangement, grotesque though it was. The dreamer, however, had little opportunity to observe all this for he was drawn at once to a corner where was a strange, spiral staircase, built of some light Indian wood, and leading through the ceiling to the story above. He ascended and emerged into the unknown region overhead.

It was a wonderful place. The details are gone —one recalls only an impression of happiness, sunshine, scents of exotic flowers, the singing of innumerable birds, the tinkling sound of a hid-

den fountain. It was no longer a room—it was a new country. Here, it seemed, dwelt peace, content, beauty. A fragment of a familiar poem drifted into the dreamer's fancies—

> "It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles
> And see the great Achilles whom we knew—"

And there was more than a sense of well-being. There was, for a little moment, a fantastic sensation of fulfillment in one's presence there. There was a feeling of power. Here, one was somehow assured, ambitions would be accomplished, hopes would come true. Here could be done the things one always wanted to do.

The dreamer wished to go on, to explore, to find the happy secret of this region, but this, for some reason, was denied him. Some all-powerful influence compelled him to go back, to descend the little staircase into the darkened parlor.

Standing there he looked through the open folding doors into the well-known sitting-room and the picture he saw halted him.

Cousin Mary and her sailor lover were standing in the middle of the room. His arms were about her, her hands were on his shoulders, her face raised to his . . . .

Almost as soon as it was perceived the vision began to fade, receding slowly into the formless, tenuous clouds of semi-consciousness. In a moment the sleeper awoke. For an instant it was difficult to disassociate from the spirit of his dream the golden light of the early spring morning, the twittering of birds, the light drip from the eaves of the brief rain left by the vanished April shower.

The later history of the spot where Cousin Mary dwelt offers its commentary on a fast changing civilization. Soon after her death the little brick house was pulled down and the cubic space it occupied was filled with heavy machinery which daily filled with its reverberations this place which was once the very epitome of quietude. Now, in their turn, the huge presses have given way to one corner of a vast office building where an army of busy clerks pursues the urgent and exacting routine of a great corporation.

The Latin poets liked to believe that every locality had its own peculiar divinity—the "genius of the place." What has become of the goddess who for so long dedicated to peacefulness this abode of a benign old age? Is it that she

was so closely identified with the one who dwelt there that when that life ceased the guardian angel fled with the departing spirit to some still fairer abode—or is the genius of the place really called Memory, who, in the minds of those who cherish her, effectually preserves against any merely material desecration the places she once held dear?

XIV: The Quiet Life

XIV: The Quiet Life

"More than half a century of life has taught me that most of the wrong and folly which darkens earth is due to those who cannot possess their souls in quiet; that most of the good which saves mankind from destruction comes of life that is led in thoughtful stillness."

—The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft.

WITH the thoughtless cruelty of childhood we used to call him "Thermometer" Tatlock because he was forever watching the temperature. The tradition was that whenever he went down cellar to look at the furnace he arrayed himself in overcoat, fur cap, muffler and arctics. Nicknames are not always brutal and the cruelty of this case lay only in the peculiar features of the situation—the fact, in short, that the subject of our joke was such a gentle, retiring, almost apologetic old gentleman. He was deprecatory even toward us children. To adult reflection it seems ruthless to have made any fun of him at all.

Yet there was no doubt about the fact that he was an odd character. The incarnation of bashfulness, he was, like most bashful persons, persistent and consistent in doing just exactly as he liked so far as the demands of a world, not primarily constituted for people of his stripe, allowed. It must be confessed that, in modern parlance, he got away with it pretty successfully.

Probably this was because he was wise enough not to demand very much. It did not seem that either the rise and fall of nations or of the stock market gave him very much concern. Doubtless he did not disturb himself greatly over the question of who was to be the next president. His chief worry seemed to be the weather, though why he should have troubled himself about this, when most of his life was spent indoors, remains a mystery. Memory seems to recall some story of ill-health in early life which perhaps inculcated a habit of consulting weather conditions that lasted as long as life itself—and he lived to a green old age.

The spacious brick mansion that was his home stood sideways, as it were, to the street, behind a tall fence with panelled posts and blunt, rounded pickets, like large broomsticks of alter-

nating heights. Both the main front door and what we should now call the service entrance were reached by a gravelled driveway with a flag walk beside it that terminated around in the rear of the house at the stable. Narrow flights of steps with wrought-iron railings, topped here and there with brass balls, led to the two doors.

The entrance hall was almost square, a passage way running off toward the kitchen from the left-hand farther corner and the staircase ascending on one's left as one entered. At the landing, half way up, was a large window, opening to the north, which illumined the hall and stair-well with an even, rather bare light. Somewhere in the wall was a recess in which stood a bust of Cicero, of which the eyes, formed without indication of the pupils after the fashion of its period of sculpture, gave an effect of blindness fascinating to the childish imagination.

On the right was a little room where Mr. Tatlock's sister, a dear old lady who always wore a little flat lace cap with a black bow, generally sat knitting. Straight ahead was the parlor where occasionally, when Mr. Tatlock's niece was visiting at the house, there were subdued children's parties. On these occasions he was

never visible. His own room was the library, east of the parlor, with a southern exposure toward the garden.

Here we never entered, but once or twice we caught a glimpse of the interior through the door left unguardedly open by some momentary oversight. The picture thus presented had as its background the south wall of the room with its two windows between which stood the chimney piece. Above the mantle, which was supported by miniature Ionic columns, hung a portrait of a gentleman with a great deal of hair and shirt frill, and below a bright fire burned, partly concealed by a fire screen, beside which, reading in a large easy chair, was Mr. Tatlock. Recollection is still vivid of the startled, rather furtive glance, the look of a timid animal whose place of refuge had been discovered, directed toward us as we peeked in.

What was the old man reading as he sat there day after day and year after year, while presidents were elected, national policies inaugurated and abondoned, the maps of the world changed here and there, automobiles invented, and the children grew up, went to college, got married and left the old street? Probably no one knows

for a certainty, but we should be willing to guess that his favorites were Burke, the Spectator, Boswell's Johnson, Pope, Charles Lamb, Leigh Hunt and perhaps Gibbon. Did he, we wonder, ever read a novel? If so, it is doubtful whether he got much beyond Jane Austen and Mrs. Gaskell.

The house had a lovely old garden that stretched away to the east, down a slope that was broken into two or three terraces. At the eastward end was a level portion where the box-lined gravel walk from the house made a circle around an old oak tree under which was a bench. There were a good many old fashioned flowers and shrubs in the garden and some pear trees, but who took care of the pruning and gardening, except Mr Tatlock's sister who assuredly could not do it all, is still unexplained.

There was a hired man whom we called "Mister" O'Neil who sometimes went to the post office and may have done other errands, but as his title implies he seems to have been above gardening. At any rate there is no recollection of seeing him at work in the garden. In spite of his name there was nothing in his appearance that indicated Irish extraction. He was not a hired

man at all in the New England sense; he was more the type of the confidential servant of the English novelists. He was dark, wore a beard, dressed habitually in black and looked like a particularly doleful undertaker.

We never saw Mr. Tatlock and "Mister" O'Neil together and yet imagination—perhaps it is only imagination—somehow groups them as a pair of confidants. In a way their characteristics were similar. Both were inscrutable, quiet persons, content to remain in the background. For all of them the world might wag. In our imaginations at least, "Mister" O'Neil knew all about Mr. Tatlock. He accepted the other's peculiar reticences, so like his own, as a matter of course; he knew his innocent secrets; he even could tell, if he wished, what books he read there before the fire that burned from September to June. With this taciturn individual we doubted if Mr. Tatlock was bashful. Possibly their mutual congeniality of temperament centered about the furnace, for they both watched it.

"Mister" O'Neil could have revealed, we believe, what the shock was that we all decided Mr. Tatlock must have received early in life. The girls were convinced that this shock was

emotional—an unhappy love affair, or the death of some dear friend. The boys, on the other hand, were inclined to talk about a purely physical catastrophe—a runaway accident, perhaps, or a blow on the head from a highway robber. For all of these surmises we had not the slightest foundation, except in fancy, and mature reflection leads to the conclusion that probably we were entirely in error. It seems now much more likely that this old bachelor's oddities were due to life-long frail health.

And yet one can never be sure and somehow one glimpse of Mr. Tatlock which it was permitted one of the children to catch hinted, inexplicably and without any particular warrant, at other possibilities. It was the only out-of-door memory of him that is left. The boy, who still remembers well that spring day, was in the next yard, hanging over the fence looking into Mr. Tatlock's garden when he suddenly became aware that Mr. Tatlock himself was sitting on the bench in the circle the path made around the old tree. The old gentleman did not see the small spectator who had been betrayed into an unaccustomed quietness by the absence of companions and some subtle and unacknowl-

edged influence of the first warm afternoon of the year.

Nothing whatever happened. Mr. Tatlock sat there, looking up from time to time at the young leaves above him, tapping his stick on the soft turf and smiling to himself. Of what long-gone springs was he dreaming? It was clear that whatever his thoughts were, they were happy ones.

Probably to most boys the ideal life is one that comprises "the joy of eventful living." Here for the first time it dawned upon this youthful interloper that one could be happy in quietness and seculsion. There were, it appeared, certain satisfactions in other careers than those of the cowboy and the soldier. Up to this time the boy had never been able to understand why heaven was so often spoken of as a place of rest. He did not understand wholly now, but a later comprehension had here its inception.

And so let us remember Mr. Tatlock sitting, lost in meditation, in his garden. After all he was not without influence in his environment, unobtrusive soul that he was. He made himself felt in his little world. He counted. The boy who watched him over the fence that day thought of

him again when he read in a recent essay: "The truth is that a man's life is the expression of his temperament and that what eventually matters is his attitude and relation to life . . . . not only his performance."

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